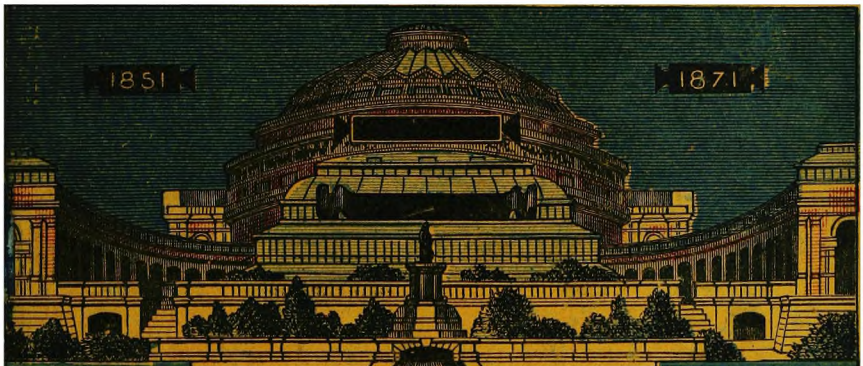


MRS BROWN AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

By ARTHUR SKETCHLEY.

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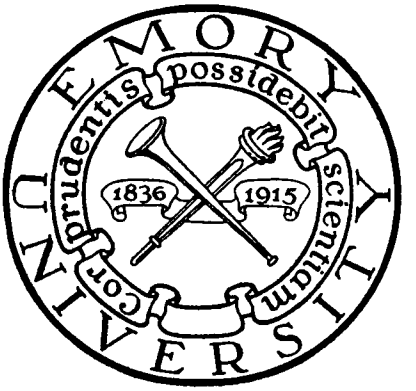
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MRS. BROWN

AT THE

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION

AND

SOUTH KENSINGTON.

BY

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY,

AUTHOR OF "THE BROWN PAPERS," "MRS. BROWN'S 'OLLIDAY OUTIN'S," "MRS. BROWN IN AMERICA," ETC.

LONDON:

GEORGE ROUTLEDGE AND SONS,

BROADWAY, LUDGATE.

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MRS. BROWN AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I'M sure I 'adn't no consumption there was a-goin' to be a Exhibition this year let alone a intynational one, as in course means lettin' in things from forrin parts; as is all werry well in moderation, but I don't 'old with fluddin' the market, as the sayin' is, with forrin produce like Common Gardin is with peas and new potaters, as the forriners may keep to theirselves for me, as ain't no taste in 'em, nor yet their fruit for that matter.

But as to me a-goin' to that Intynational it never once entered my 'ead, for it's a deal of trouble goin' about, partikler now as I'm so much with Mrs. Padwick, as is always a-goin' on about me bein' dressed old-fashioned, and that's why I took to one of them costoomes, and nothink wouldn't do but I must 'ave 'eels to my boots, as pretty nigh cost me my life the only time as I wore 'em, thro' a-trippin' me up, and

a-turnin' my hancle constant, and as to one of them shinnyons pinned on to the back of my 'ead, I wouldn't 'ave it, so Emma Malins as is clever at the millinery busyness, she took and sewed one on to my bonnet as were a 'at shape wore for'ard with a flower, as weren't 'uman air, but a beastly thing as tickled the back of my neck awful, made of frizzy stuff and a silk plat, as they all said took twenty years off me at the werry least, tho' I must say as I remembers when quite a gal me a-'avin' a gipsy 'at as every one said become me wonderful; but law, I ain't wore sich a thing over five-and-forty year, and only shows as you never can tell wot you may come to afore you dies, not as I wanted to 'ave it, only Mrs. Padwick she says, "Oh! do dress a little bit like other people, for," she says, "you're quite stared at, and," she says, "you may as well be out of the world as out of the fashion; and," she says, "every one will be so dressed this season, and we may see Queen Wictoria 'erself as is a-goin' to wisit this 'ere Exhibition like she did the old one, on the quiet."

Besides, certingly there was both Mrs. Welbank and 'er arf sister Mrs. Podder up in town, as is cousins to Mrs. Padwick, and like all them country people full of London and the fashions, and 'adn't never see me, but heard a deal about me; so Mrs. Padwick she says to me, "Wotever you d

Martha, 'old your own," and so I did that fust evenin' as they arrived a-drinkin' tea in my welweteen suit and blue in my cap, as Miss Malins said were the ditter to the Duchess of Cambridge.

When fust I 'eard 'em talkin' about that Exhibition, I thought they meant that there picter show as is now moved to Pickerdilly, and used to be where the King's Mews stood when I were a gal, and arter that the skelinton of the gigantic wail in a wooden box, close agin St. Martin's Church, as were open waste ground afore Lord Nelson were put up, as my grandmother always called St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, as I can remember myself a-walkin' thro' the churchyard when a gal, as was all took away up to Camdin Town, and berried decent, and not throwed about Kensington Gardins, as is a outrage, and is where my grandmother lays thro' 'avin' wished to be berried near 'er own parents as kep' a brush shop in Chandos Street over fifty years, and remembered the Pretender well, as they always respected for the rightful King thro' both a-livin' over eighty, as takes you back a good many years, for my dear mother could jest remember 'em, as were born 'erself the year of the riots, and I was 'er youngest as takes you back to Queen Anne, so in course knows a deal about London thro' 'avin' 'eard 'em speak about it, werry different to wot it is now, with no gas lamps and nothing but the

parish lamps, as I well remembers long afore the new perlice come in, as did used to be Bow Street officers in red waistcoats, and Old Townsend were the 'ead on, as was like own brothers with King George, as I remembers a-seein' myself once in that there new church close agin Grosvenor Place, as did used to be called the Five Fields, in a pew up in the gallery with a flaxen wig, as were a cruel 'arted man and bad neighbour I should say, thro' 'avin' chopped off the legs of the old lady's dog next door jest to spite 'er, as I 'eard a old lady tellin' my dear mother about pretty nigh fifty years ago, as know'd it for a fact.

It never entered my 'ead, as the sayin' is, to think as they was a-goin' to 'ave another Exhibition like 'Igh Park, but Mrs. Padwick, bless you, she's up to heverything, and when stoppin' with 'er I'm a reg'lar rollin'-stone, as the sayin' is.

Not but wot I likes to see wot's a-goin' on, as espands the mind they do say, as must be good for the 'ealth, a-givin' full play to the 'art.

So when Mrs. Welbank asked me if I'd make one for to go and see the Exhibition, I says, "Well, thank you, no!"

She says, "Oh, do come, we did ought for to encourage the fine harts, as is all now at South Kensington."

I says, "As did used to be Old Brompton, and

considered fine air for them as was weak in the chest, like the South of France for mildness, and all market gard'ners, as I don't consider too many on 'em is olesome all round you, thro' bein' too forcin', but in course all them painters did ought to be encouraged in their works."

As I says to Mrs. Welbank, as is fond of the fine harts, thro' 'er 'usban' bein' in the ile and colour line, and therefore werry willin' for to wisit South Kensington, as is nothink 'ardly but paintins, as is a old anshent part, as I well remembers all lanes and dead walls when quite a gal myself, and lived servant there pretty near a year, as were a bad place for me thro' bein' parties as wasn't respectable, as in course you can't espect to find everybody, not even at Brompton, tho' I'm sure there were a clergyman there as did used to walk about in 'is black silk gownd of a Sunday, with legs as balustrades of bridges, was fools to, as 'ad been of the Baptist perswashun, and took and turned to the Church, the same as the Archbishop of Canterbury 'isself, as were of the Scotch perswashun, and wouldn't never 'ave been even a bishop if he 'adn't took and turned thro' the Scotch not a-'oldin' with bishops; and 'im a-knowin' which side 'is bread were buttered on, as the sayin' is.

It's downright wonderful for to see 'ow they've been and knocked down Old Brompton, with Oliver

Cromwell's werry own lane as he lived in along with Madame Westris, as went to Mr. Pollard's school, as is now all turned Roman Catholics, and pretty nigh drove that there minister with the legs mad, a-settin' up next door to 'im a reg'lar oppersition, with their Oratorios, as is lovely music I've 'eard say, and titled folks a-supportin' on 'em, not as Queen Wictoria 'olds with them, for she were dreadful put out when they fust come over along with Card'nal Wiseman, and says as she wouldn't stand it, not as she meant it, but only 'asty words as she don't mind wot parties is so as they pays their taxes and don't go a-breakin' the trees in the park, as worrets 'er dreadful.

I don't know as I wanted for to wisit them picters, for nobody can't say but wot in my travels I've see picters enuf and paintin' too, and never agin will I stop in the 'ouse with the painters in it, as smells that coarse as it seems for to get into your constitution, as is 'ighly deleterous, the same as canary birds as it will kill thro' not a-takin' away their waters, as it will float on the top on, and deadly poison as will bring on painter's colic with the creepin' palsy, as were the end of poor Joe Millins, as always complained of a tightness in the chest, as the doctor took and listened to thro' a stereoscope, and then told 'is mother as he'd got two buckles on 'is lungs, with a 'ard cough as

nothink wouldn't loosen, tho' I told 'er as them quack medsins wasn't no good; and yet certingly linseed tea sweetened with honey seemed to give relief.

But painters is a unolesome trade I considers, for I well remember a young man as come for to take Lady Wittles in 'er dimonds and feathers, the same as she wore when Queen Wictoria dined with the Lord Mare. Well, that young man he were always askin' for a drop of sperrits agin the smell of the paint, as shortened 'is days, poor feller, leastways went to the gold diggin's, and were never 'eard on, and left 'er ladyship not arf done in the breakfast-room, as were 'ighly immoral, thro' 'avin' 'ad twenty pounds down for to buy colors, and 'ardly ever used a bit, not but wot, no doubt, they costs a deal, as I see 'im myself squeeze little bits out as if they was werry precious, and only rubbed in the features, as nobody couldn't tell wot they was meant for, escept a splosh of red for where the nose was to be.

I do not 'old with them paintin's myself, as is sure to get tossed about, and get into the British Museum or some out of the way 'ole like that, as is a dreadful end for any one to come to, partikler arter bein' 'ung in gold frames over the sideboard or both sides of the fireplace to match, like Mr. and Mrs. Wenting, in the livery stable line,

as were transported for 'orse-stealin', and cast for death, but got off thro' 'er bein' wet-nuss to the Lord Chancellor, as went down on 'is knees to King George the Third, as wouldn't 'ave give way only thro' Queen Charlotte puttin' in 'er word, as know'd wot it was to be a mother 'erself.

I'm sure it ain't no good 'avin' no museums nor picters neither as long as there's mobs a-goin' about like Paris, a-burnin' and a-destroyin', as I'm sure I felt for that there Toolerees the same as if it 'ad been my own mother, not as ever I 'eld with them Bonyparties bein' there, as was nothink better than a downright usurpers theirselves, and that's why I says as Queen Wictoria didn't ought to incourage sich, for fear as that there Odger and Braidlaw, as they calls 'im, should get the roughs to make 'im king, and then where would the Prince of Wales and all the rest of the Royal Family be; why in course nowheres, as is frightful to think on, and I'm sure makes me tremble for to think on it when I goes thro' Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, and them places roundabout there sometimes on a Sunday mornin', to see the crowds as grows greater every year in course, with the young people a-growin' up, as I can't tell wot the end on it will be, but if ever a London mob should get the hupper 'and, why Paris will be a fool to it, I'm afraid.

I only 'opes as the great folks will think on it,

and see if somethink can't be done with all the wice and misery.

No doubt Queen Wictoria often thinks over it with a 'eavy art, and that's why she makes the Prince of Wales do all as he can for to keep things together, and all them as is rich did ought not to think they've done enuf in givin' money, cos that only makes workin' people paupers, but every one did ought to jine together and imitate Queen Wictoria, as does 'er best for to encourage trade, and see as parties as works is paid proper, and not be a-gettin' a few shillin's a week, while them as employs 'em is a-makin' of their ten of thousan's a-year, as is too great profits for any tradespeople, not as I'm a Socialist, nor nothink of that, but thinks as some is a deal too poor and others a deal too rich in this world, and that's wheres the trouble.

It were a Toosday as we went, and it were agreed as we should go and see the Albert 'All fust, as they told me was like the Great Exhibition.

"Ah!" I says, "there won't never be nothink like that fust one, as were lovely."

"Oh!" says Mrs. Welbank, "that's gone."

"Yes," I says, "and it's no use a-cryin' over skim milk," as the sayin' is, "so let's make the best of wot we've got, and I certingly am glad as the weather ain't that stifly 'ot, not as I'm a-goin to walk."

Says Mrs. Padwick, "We'll go by the Underground, as is always cool, partikler gettin' at the Edgware Road, as is all free and open, and will get us there in no time with a bus at the other end."

"But," I says, "we must go from Baker Street, thro' a-callin' to pick up Mrs. Welbank, as is a-stoppin' in the Marrybone Road, as did used to be called the New Road," and so we did accordin', but when I got down to the bottom of them stairs, thought as my breath were gone for ever, thro' a puff of sulphur as a train were jest a-goin' off left behind, and seemed for to stifle me.

Mrs. Welbank's a werry obstinate character, and will 'ave 'er own way, and thro' 'er bein' along with friends, over-persuaded Mrs. Padwick for to come the longest way, as were the New Road, and go by the Underground, tho' I said as a cab across the park were jest as cheap and a deal nearer for me and Mrs. Padwick, and wouldn't 'ave give way, but then you see Mrs. Podder were a-goin', as is a werry full figger, and thro' me not a-bein' slight, why in course it would not 'ave been pleasant for Mrs. Padwick to be scrouged, so I says, "Let's go by rail," as were agreed to.

I'm sure that Mrs. Podder is that worret as she's enuf to drive you wild, when a-takin' of 'er ticket a-findin' all manner of faults, and then sayin' as

the party inside that there little wirework 'ole 'ad been and give 'er wrong change.

I says, "Nonsense, it ain't likely."

"Oh!" she says, "ain't it, why my own cousin, Jane Myers, were swindled shameful on one of these 'ere lines, as is all thieves."

In course them remarks made that party inside them wireworks feel 'urt, as were only nat'ral, and not the truth, for I 'eard all about Jane Myers, a-thinkin' as she'd lost 'er money, and then a-remem-berin' as she'd give the man a two shillin' bit, a-thinkin' it were 'arf-a-crown, as is the reason I can't abear a-changin' them coins, as is that puzzlin', and now-a-days you werry often gets them French soos give you in change with a bus, as is thro' them forriners a-ridin' on 'em so much.

Not as I believe it's that as brought the small-pox, as were here in my grandmother's time and long afore, and 'ave 'eard my dear mother speak about a uncle of ern as 'ad it conflerent, and dread-ful marked, with the loss of a eye, long afore wac-cination were born or thought on, as is wot I 'ad myself thro' my eldest brother a-dyin', thro' bein' noculated, as brought it on nat'ral, as is wot I don't 'old with, cos I think you didn't never ought to fly into trouble, nor yet meet it 'arf way, as the sayin' is; the same as I considers Mrs. Colchin as made 'er little boy kiss Mrs. Malin's little grandchild in

the 'ooping cough, as took it and died in screamin' conwulsions, as nobody couldn't call the course of natur.

I must say as that there undergrounded railway is a werry great conwenience, and no doubt relieves the streets wonderful, as would be chuck full, as the sayin' is, without it, and goodness knows the busses is that now, for I'm sure the time as I 'ad to wait only last week for a Atlas to come by empty were enuf to wear out the patience of Jove; not as the young man of the City Atlas need 'ave been that sharp with me cos I never stopped 'im in Baker Street, but a lady inside, tho' a stranger to me, took and fancied as I'd 'ailed 'im, and stopped the bus of 'er own accord, as jumped down and run for to lead me off the pavement, and would 'ave dragged me into 'is bus, only I says, "Helefant and Castle," jest as I got to the door, as made 'im jump up agin and slam it, enuf to take it off the 'inges, a-leavin' me a-standin' in the middle of the road, a easy prey to them 'ansoms and pheatons, as reg'lar makes a pint of drivin' slap at me, and bein' swells don't know 'ow to drive, and made my art come in my mouth, as the sayin' is, the top of Park Lane the other day, as parties is a worretin' me about with letters, a-askin' when I'm a-goin' to put up my statue at the other end, as in course I never should think of doin' myself, as would be indelicate

in me, but let them as thinks that 'ighly of me do it the same as Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington, let alone Queen Wictoria, and I shant say a word.

I must say as I'm sorry as they've been and broke open 'Amilton Place, as were that quiet and jest fit for them nobilities widders to live in, as I know'd two duchesses myself thro' Miss Malkins a-livin' lady's-maid next door to one, as know'd all the swells by sight, and 'ave pinted 'em out to me by the score in the park of a Sunday years ago, when they did used to come out, afore some on 'em turned to the Scotch way, a-sayin' it were sinful to ride in your carridge of a Sunday, as 'ave seen Queen Wictoria 'erself in the park along with Count d'Orsey, as were the 'ansomest man as ever lived, and looked like wax-work in a white silk coat, with the smallest foot as ever I see in a 'uman boot, with a broad brim 'at, as were werry much a one side, on 'orseback.

But, as I were a-sayin', I can't abear that undergrounded railway, as always takes away my breath, partikler at Baker Strect, as seem to be all sulphur, let alone the stairs as is dreadful steep, but nothink to the Camdin Road, as is enuf to break your back, as I'm sure my legs reg'lar trembled under me that time as I went to drink tea with Mrs. Thompson, as lives close agin the Cattle

Market, as I well remembers the Copenagen Fields, as was all country when I was a gal, and shows 'ow time passes.

Not as Mrs. Thompson did ever 'ave ought to 'ave married agin in doubt, and to 'ave 'er fust come 'ome in the middle of the night in the name of Billers, as were a missionary, leastways that's wot were give out as he'd gone to conwert the 'Indoos, but some say twenty years over a forged will, as did used to be death, and got 'is ticket, as she never thought on till she 'eard 'is woice, a-puttin' 'er 'ead out of the fust floor winder to see who were a-knockin' at that 'our, and fell back in a fit when he called Jemima Ann, as were 'er maiden name.

It's a mussy as she'd berried Thompson a fort-night afore, or there'd 'ave been a pretty 'ow-d'ye-do; not as she let 'im in, but called the next mornin', and said as he only wanted to know if it were true as she'd been false to 'im from 'er own lips, but a wile waggerbone 'ad better 'ave left it alone, as only wanted to get money out of her, as led to words, and it come out as she'd never been 'is lawful wife at all, thro' 'im bein' a married man when he took 'er to church, as shows wot depth there is in some for to make religion a cloak on, as the sayin' is, for to 'ide their evil ways, as come 'ome to 'im.

She little thought, poor soul, when she give 'im in charge, as she were a-sendin' 'im back to 'Oller-way Prison, as were 'is native hair, thro' bein' born close agin White Conduit 'ouse, as were nothink but a tea gardin in my dear mother's time, and is now all turned into streets at the back of that there Agricultural 'All, as is so called thro' bein' the Cattle Show, and goodness knows what we shall come to when they comes to 'ave a 'Orse Show for the prize 'orses, as'll be fatted for killin' no doubt.

They may call it progress, but not wot I 'olds with, tho' of course there's no tellin' wot any one would do if drove to it by 'unger the same as Paris, a place I can't abear the name on, with them red waggerbones, as in my opinion they ain't shot 'arf enuf on, and if they'd 'ave took and scragged them Bonyparties it would be a good riddance, as was a lot of beggars when they went over there, as it's well beknown as he borrered the money to go, and now can come back and live in their fine 'ouses, and want us to believe as they ain't got no money out of the French, as was a-goin' to march to Berling, and go back to Paris wictorious or dead, as is werry like a wail, as the sayin' is, and knows a trick worth two of that.

But as to 'im a-goin' back, why in course if the French wants a king, let 'em 'ave a real one, and

not this 'ere everlastin' Brummagum trumpery, as is always a-kickin' up a row, not but wot I firmly believes as the French loves a row, and can't be 'appy for long without one, as is in my opinion a judgment on 'em for murderin' that there King and Queen, as innercent blood will be sure to stick to them as sheds it.

But I must say as that undergrounded railways does get you anywheres in no time, not but wot it may lead you astray the same as it did me a-goin' to Nottin' 'Ill Gate, and got took out goodness knows where, pretty nigh to Kensal Green, and 'ardly time to get in and out for the trains off agin, afore you knows where you are, and parties will jump out while it's in motion, as were werry nigh the end of me, but for bein' a stout figger and not room for me to fall between the platform and the carridge, but was wedged in tight, and all thro' Mrs. Millwood a 'urryin' me in as there weren't no occasions for, and the wrong train, tho' I'd asked the porter three times, and goin' to She'-perd's Bush arter all, as is that changed as there ain't no shepherds nor bushes neither within miles of it, as were 'ighway robbers on when I was a gal, thro' a well rememberin' a party bein' robbed there a-comin' 'ome from dinin' with a friend one Sunday evenin' in February, as took heverythink he stood up in down to 'is boots, as crawled 'ome more dead

than alive to 'is lodgin's near Fitzroy Square; and never even got a 'ackney-coach till close agin Tyburn Turnpike, as stood close agin the Marble Arch, and kep' 'is bed over three weeks with the roomatics a-settlin' in his hancles.

I can't say as I cared for to see that Inty-national as they calls it, for I've see such lots of them things as is only shops arter all, cos well I remembers that one in 'Igh Park in '51, as a gentleman were a-lecturin' about, and a-sayin' as there never wouldn't be no more wars nor fightin's, but we was all to be like one family with peace and plenty, and afore a year were out, why if there wasn't that Lewy Napoleon with 'is coo-de-tar a-cuttin' the people's throats in Paris streets, and wot I blames 'im for is as it were done that treacherous, and no warnin' give, as I've 'eard all about it from parties as see it bein' done, cos in course if they was the same as them Red Republicins why shoot 'em down in welcome, only give 'em notice as you'll do it if they don't go 'ome quiet.

The same as the Bristol riots, as I well remembers as the mare took and read the Riot Act and fired right over their 'eads, as burnt down arf the town, all thro' a lectioneerin' riot, as always were a disgraceful scene if only the beadle, as I well remembers in Chelsea myself with such a mob, as they

wos obligated for to bring out the parish injines for to play on the mob, as wasn't no play for a old lady as my dear mother worked for, as were out for a airin' in a glass coach, as they did used to be called, and 'ad the 'ose turned in at the winder, as drenched 'er and 'er maid to the skin, and give 'er pug dog a fit, as she wouldn't 'ave lost not for fifty pounds, but were run over by the brewer's dray, and 'ad 'im stuffed in a glass case under 'er sideboard to 'er dyin' day, as her two grandnephews 'ad burnt, when they come into the property, thro' bein' full of moths, as 'ad got into the Turkey carpet, and no wonder neither, for it had been down over forty years in 'er 'ouse in Bewfort Row afore she were a widder and moved into Cook's Ground.

So, as I were a-sayin', I didn't much care about that there Exhibition, thro' 'avin' see two in London and two in Paris a'ready, as none on 'em weren't like the fust, with the weather that lovely, and certingly worth seein', as Queen Wictoria did used to walk about it jest for all the world like anybody else, and bring the children too, as is all passed away like a dream, and makes us all think as we're a-gettin' on; and as to wars bein' at a end, why we've 'ad 'em wuss than ever since then, wot with that there Injin mutiny, and the Crimear, and I'm sure we can't say a word about that old

Tears bein' too sewere in puttin' down them Communists, when we remembers 'ow we took and blew them Injin mutinies from guns, and no doubt served them out pretty well, tho', of course, as Brown always will 'ave it, them Injins 'ad a right to mutineer, and if they'd 'ad that Grabidaldi to 'ead 'em they'd 'ave got the day, and then in course we should 'ave said as we was werry glad, and 'ave talked about their gettin' their liberty, and all manner like that, jest like the Poles, or them Ightalians, cos in course if they was slaves so is them Injins to us, and in course it ain't no reason cos a man 'ave got a black skin as he should be bullied any more than a white one, and if you come to that, I've seen some Injins myself as wasn't a bit blacker than some of the Neepolitans, nor yet 'arf as little clothes on.

I cannot say as I likes that there undergrounded rail, as is a long way round from Baker Street to Kensington Gore, as is where Count D'Orsey did used to live afore it were all pulled down, and I must say of all the aggrawatin' woomin as ever I did come out with, it's Mrs. Welbank, as will always pull at you when she wants to speak, and pretty nigh caused my death when we got to the South Kensington station, and was told to get up the stairs as quick as we could, for the busses did fill so.

I'd got 'old of Mrs. Podder's harm, as is a short-necked, red face party, as blows like a grampus, as the sayin' is, up stairs, and no light weight a-holdin' on to you with a 'ot 'and a-pinchin' your arm, thro' bein' nervous.

I was a-hurryin' up them stairs, and 'ad got pretty nigh to the top, when that Mrs. Welbank give a pull at my gownd jest as I were a-puttin' my foot on the top stair, as made me start back and fetch Mrs. Podder a drive in the chest with my elber, as sent 'er a-flyin' back'ards like, a-draggin' me with 'er, and if we didn't both go back'ard with all our force and sweep every one behind us down into the landin', and if it 'adn't been as the ticket place or somethink stopped us, we might 'ave rolled into the railway.

There was a nice hubbub; parties a-sayin' I done it for the purpose, and some a-sayin' as Mrs. Podder did ought to be bled, for she were blew in the face, and breathed frightful 'ard, thro' 'er nostrums, as when we got 'er into the ladies' room a little somethink 'ot set 'er all right, and not so much shook as might be espected, thro' 'avin' fell soft on others as was comin' up close behind, not as the inspector 'ad any occasions to talk about me a-skylarkin', as were the last of my thoughts at a railway, as I can't abear no jokes, as they may end serious.

It were some time time afore Mrs. Podder were quite 'erself agin, and I must say I was werry much put out, partikler at parties as jeered at my size, tho' I'm not so stout as 'er by many a inch, tho' I must say I were werry short with Mrs. Welbank, and says to 'er, "I'd thank you not to go a-clutchin' at me no more," as she turned quite nasty about, and said, "If a woman of your weight will wear them 'igh 'eels, why it's wonder you can keep on your feet at all."

I didn't say nothink, but set a-talkin' to Mrs. Podder till she felt rested, and then we went out for to get the bus, as is a werry great convenience, and shouldn't be afraid to go outside myself thro' a nice little staircase with a brass bannister for to get up by, as took us with no more trouble, as was included in our tickets right to the Halbert 'All itself, as it runs to reg'lar from the undergrounded, and sets you down at the door, as is a fine buildin', tho' for all the world like a gasometer outside, and some says is made arter, and I should say a good deal arter, that there Collyseeum, not the one as stands in the Regency Park, with the Earthquake at Lisbon, but that other as is to be see jest outside Rome, and all tumblin' to bits, as they do say did used to be a reg'lar wild beast show, as all Rome did used to go and see 'em fed, not a barrow-full of butcher's meat, like

the Jewlogicals Gardins in the Regency Park at four o'clock, but live 'uman bein's, as might be all werry nat'ral for lions and tigers to dewour, as it is their natures to, but not fit for Christshuns to set and see done, as in course the Pope never didn't 'old with and put it down, but if them Red Republicins gets 'old of it, why, they'd butcher the Pope 'isself there, and glory in it, the waggerbones, the same as that Archbishop of Paris, as is too dreadful to think on, as were that afferble, a-walkin' about them Tooleree gardins, a-givin' of his blessin' to them little children, as is a eternal disgrace to every man in Paris, as stood by and suffered such things to be done. But I've done with 'em; and they mustn't never talk to me no more about French bravery, for tho' I can't abear the Germans, I must say as they've cut a deal better figger than the French with all their blowin', as was a-goin' to take Berling, and then took and laid down their arms with their Humpire at their 'ead, as put his tail between 'is legs and sneaked off with 'undreds of thousands of sojers at 'is back.

No wonder them Germans chuckles, and if I'd been them I'd 'ave walked into Paris, a-draggin' the French Humpire and all at my 'eels, and 'ave give 'em fits if they dared for to resist, and then there wouldn't 'ave been none of them red goin's on, a-murderin' and a-burnin' innercent people, the

wretches, as is like all bullies, awful cowards in the hend; and as to liberty, if that's liberty, the sooner it's 'ung, drawn, and quartered, the better, for it's a reg'lar cuss and no blessin', as makes men a deal wuss than wild beasts, as in course can't 'elp theirselves, thro bein' born to it.

I must say as I were dreadful disappinted when fust I went into that Halbert 'All, thro' a-espectin' to find it like them other exhibitions, a fine coo-dool, as the French people says, and so I says to the rest, "Let's come upstairs so as to get a fine view on it all at once."

Mrs. Welbank she says, "The Exhibition ain't the Halbert 'All."

I says, "I'm sure as it is."

"Well then," she says, "I'm werry much mistaken."

So I says to a party as were a-standin' there; I says, "I wants to see the coo-dool, that is full view of the 'All."

"Then," he says, "you must go up and look down on it."

I says, "In course I know'd that," and I says to Mrs. Welbank, "I told you so."

She says, "My feet is that throbby I'd rather not go up many stairs."

Says a party, "Go up in the lift, marm, as is only a penny, and will save your legs."

I says, "Young man, don't you make too free about our legs, as is our business and not yourn."

Says Mrs. Welbank and the others, "Let's go up in the lift by all means."

I says, "None of your lifts for me," thro' well a-rememberin' a party as went up in it over in Ireland, as give way with 'im, and broke the bottom out, and come down with a run. So I says, "You go up and I'll foller by the stairs."

Says the others, "Oh! don't let us part, we may miss you."

I says, "That's impossible," and goes up to the lift for to see 'em off.

Says a young boy a-goin' in, "Don't let that old woman come in, they'll never lift us with 'er weight."

I says, "My boy, you didn't ought to be brought out, as ain't been never learned no manners to speak to your elders like that; but," I says, "don't be afraid, as I ain't a-comin' in, not if you'd pay me," and off I walks all along them passages, as is werry dull and dreary like, jest for all the world like a theayter by day.

Escept a-goin' up St. Paul's I never did know anythink like them stairs, as I thought I never should get to the top of, with my legs a-bendin' under me, not as I 'urried, but 'ad a glass of bitter ale, and then took my time, and stopped in some of

them places as was full of screens made up with bits of cloth and sich like, as was intended for piecebrokers to buy I should say, as I know'd Mr Clinton well myself, near Clare Market, in that line, as 'ad wonderful remnants by him sometimes, enuf to make best part of a coat, as is where Mrs. Munk always got 'er stuff to make Munk's clothes, as she could make equal to any tailor, tho' a 'ard job sometimes to get a good match for the sleeves, as it were goin' for to buy with 'er as I come to know about the piecebrokerin' business, as is quite a trade in itself.

Parties was werry perlite a-tellin' me to keep on, but I says, "I only wants to get to the top for to get a full view on it all at once."

"Then," says a man, "take it easy, and you'll get there in time, as is quite worth the trouble I can tell you."

So on I goes up and up, till I felt I was a-gettin' in that 'eat, as might be as much as my life was worth if I got a sudden chill on the top on, yet afraid to linger about thro' there bein' that draught up them stairs as were enuf to turn a mill, as the sayin' is.

Up and up I goes, but for all my takin' of it easy when I did get to the top, I were reg'lar dead beat, and my legs a-tremblin' under me, a-feelin' that dreadful weak and all tottery like, so I staggers

for'ard and ketched 'old of the railin', and looked down suddin, as give me sich a turn as I reg'lar reeled agin.

I never did look down from sich a 'ight, as seemed like a-lookin' into the bottomless pit full of empty chairs and seats, as turned me that giddy and faint, as I took out of my reddicule my little flask, as the stopper on is made for to act as a cup, and took that drain as no lady needn't blush to do, partikler when adwised by a doctor, for a nasty stitch in the side as come on that wiolent thro' them stairs, and then the suddin shock of lookin' down, as sent the blood to my 'ead with a rush, and took my breath away that short as I couldn't do more when I left go on that rail than give a stagger back'ards to a chair, as I ketched old on and set down in with a wiolent flop.

There was some dressed-out parties, for ladies I will not call 'em, a-settin' there close by, as got up the moment they see me all of a 'urry and walks off, and one on 'em calls out to a young gal as 'adn't moved, a-sayin', "Come away, a disgustin' old thing."

Says that nice young gal, a-runnin' to 'er, a-lookin' at me, "Oh! dear no, mamma, she's only very tired."

'Er as she called Ma, turns round and says, "Come away, my love, I'm sure she is intosticated."

I says, "Wotever do you mean by sayin' sich base false'oods."

She says, "Go away, you disgraceful person."

I says, "Mum, afore you states them gross falsities pre'aps you'll be more certing."

"Why," she says, "I saw you with a brandy flask a-drinkin'."

I says, "Drops as is prepared for me by my own doctor, as 'ave told me it's as much as my life is worth to wenture out without 'em, as lookin' down from a 'ight bein' a thing as I never could do, not from the time as I let my little brother drop off a donkey at Battersea Fair, and have been subjec' to giddiness ever since, as ain't no reason why I should be insulted for my misfortens on the top of the Exhibition, as never comes single, for I do believe as I've lost my friends, and my trouble for my pains, as I can't get a sight of the Exhibition now I am up 'ere."

Says the lady, "I beg your pardin, mum, but really you did stagger so when fust I see you, as I thought were licker."

I says, "Mum, it's granted; but," I says, "nobody didn't ought to judge by 'pearances, as 'ave swore many a 'onest man's life away, the same as Peter Bell, the wagoner, as is enuf to bring the tears in your eyes; but," I says, "pre'aps you can tell me where I can get the coo-dool of the

Exhibition all at once, as I thought the Halbert 'All were filled with, and not empty chairs, as always gives a place a des'late look."

"Oh!" she says, "you must go down agin to the werry bottom and begin agin."

"Wot!" I says, "all up here agin? Never, no; now I am 'ere I'll set and rest myself, and pre'aps they'll give us a tune on the orgin, as I likes to 'ear, partikler in a place as looks like a place of worship of a week day as this do."

So that lady she walked off, and I set there a-lookin' about me, till, bein' rested, I asks the perlice if they was a-goin' to play the orgin or anythink.

He says as the Second Life Guards was a-goin' to play at arf-past three.

"Well," I says, "that's three 'ours to wait, and tho' I should like to see their games, as I well remembers Brown a-goin' to once, when they cut a live sheep in arf with one blow of a sword, as would be a merciful death, I should say, for the poor thing, but a dreadful sight, let alone the mess."

He didn't say nothink that perlice, as seemed to be a melancholy turn, and no wonder, poor feller, if he's got to pass 'is life in that place, as is more like a empty chapel than anything else, as no doubt Mr. Spurgin would fill any Sunday as he could be spared from over by the Helephant and

Castle, as 'ave been in bad 'ealth, I'm sorry to 'ear, as must be werry tryin' for to 'ave to be a-preachin' mornin', noon, and night, as the sayin' is.

There's werry nice paintin's all about them walls; but only fancy, I should say, cos there never wasn't nothink ever arf so lovely about London as I see picters on, tho' they did call 'em the 'Ouses of Parlyment and Blackfriars Bridge.

So arter lookin' round and not a-seein' no signs of Mrs. Welbank and the others, I begun for to think of goin' down agin to look arter the Exhibition, as the perlice told me run quite the other way, as I think they did ought to tell you at the doors; tho' they wont give no change, and gives theirselves a deal of hairs, a-orderin' of you about as tho' they was a-doin' you a favour a-takin' of your money jest for all the world like goin' over Waterloo Bridge; as in course is different, cos if the bridge 'adn't been built, as is a great conwenience for the Strand, you must go round by Westminster or up to Blackfriars; cos now the watermen is done away with thro' the penny steamers, you can't be ferried over for a penny, as you used to be when I were young at Wox'all Bridge, as my sister 'Liza never could, thro a-turnin' sea-sick afore she started, and is now married with nine down in the Black Country as they calls it, tho' I 'aven't set eyes on 'er over

seven years, except two letters thro' deaths in the family, but well to do, and 'im a 'ard workin' man, tho' fond of his beer, and no wonder, a-livin' in that fire and smoke, as reminds you of the internal regi'ns, as the sayin' is; but parties thrives there, so there's no tellin' wot you may use yourself to if you only tries and keeps a good 'art over it, not but one smoky chimbly drives me mad, and as to washin' I'm sure I should give it up, a-livin' down there, as a bad job, for the blacks must be ruination to your things great and small.

I must say as I'm glad I've see that 'All, as will 'old 'undreds of thousands no doubt when full; and a fine sight and sound too, for that matter, when they all sings together, as they did when it were opened afore Queen Wictoria, as set there all in state that grand like wax-worx, with all 'er family round 'er, as is a werry touchy sight, poor thing, and no doubt brought a tear into many a eye, a-thinkin' of the past, as is twenty year ago, and gone like a dream, tho' it seems a long time, as is pre'aps thro' me 'avin' seen a deal in that time, for it were all thro' that Great Exhibition as Brown come to be engaged two year arter in the injin line, as 'ave certingly turned up trumps for us, as the sayin' is.

Not as I'm one as is that proud for to look down with spurn on anyone as is not so well off as

myself, as is the reg'lar beggar on 'orseback, as the sayin' is, and I'm told as there's a many as 'ave made fortins out of that there South Kensington, as they do say a good deal on belongs to Queen Wictoria, thro' 'er late lamented 'avin' bought it all up, to 'ave a something to leave behind for 'is royal family, and that's why they never asks no money from Parlyment for to pay their debts like George the Fourth, as 'ad the money give 'im, but they do say as there's many as he owed money to never so much as got a smell on it, as in course weren't 'is fault, as couldn't do the same as me, as goes round with my books of a Monday mornin', a-settlin' everythink, and then can't 'elp some things a-standin' over, as is 'ow I never come to pay poor old Mr. Sillins that seven and sixpence for dyein' my curtings', as I only 'ad re-dipped, thro' 'im a-dyin' 'isself, poor feller, without chick or child, or relation in the world, so all as he left went to Queen Wictoria; so I didn't know where to send it, not a-likin' to bother 'er, as no doubt 'ad all 'is books, and will be a-lookin' over 'em some day, and say to 'erself as she don't think as Mrs. Brown 'ave acted 'onerable over them curtings; but wot-ever could I do if he wouldn't never send in the bill till the werry night afore he died, when I'd gone to spend the day in 'Ackney Wick?

I must say as that there Intynational's a werry

nice place to walk about in, but you can't see nothink for to speak on like a Exhibition, tho' there's a good deal of chaney a-standin' about, and in course lovely picters, as is werry tirein' to the legs, and mostly forriners, as in course they must be, cos no English painters can't paint tho' they does their best, and that's why it's sich a shame as them Caddymishuns, as they calls theirselves, keeps all the best places for their own paintin's, as is only flesh and blood arter all, so wot can you espect.

I'm sure if Ifs and ands was pots and pans, as the sayin' is, I don't think as there could be work for the potter's 'ands equal to wot there is in that Exhibition, as stands all along them galleries, from the chany warse down to the 'umble tilin' and chimbly pots, as is a thing for to make any one think as we ain't no better than crockery ourselves, thro' bein' clay, tho' some say as all flesh is glass, as is werry near the same thing as chaney.

Well, when I'd got thro' some of that earthenware, I was that tired as to be glad to find a chair, and down I set, a-makin' sure as them others must pass by, and a-feelin' as I wanted some refreshment, as we'd agreed as we'd dine early thro' a-'earin' as there was dinners there from a shillin' up'ards, not as I were a-goin' to 'ave any of them shillin' dinners, as I'm sure can't be good with things the price as they are, and I should think as

butcher's must be run mad, and will werry soon all make their fortins and retire, and leave us to kill our own meat, for I 'eard a young party say, as is in the sea-farin' line, and lives over at Putney, for to be 'andy to the water, as the butcher sent 'is love to them all, a-sayin' as he couldn't let 'em 'ave no more stakes under one and fippence a pound, and a lady as I knows told me with 'er own lips, out Nottin' 'Ill way, as she'd been and paid one and sevenpence for three mutton chops without the fat cut off, and 'ardly a mouthful of lean about 'em, as is like eatin' gold; so tho' faint I only took a little cold pale, as the young lady recommended, along with a sandwich, as I should 'ave liked a little more butter on myself.

Well, arter that I thought as I should like for to see the picters thro' bein' one as always were fond of anythink like that, and 'ave 'ad my front railin's done a light green, with the flower-pots red leaded, on the winder sell, and all the steps nicely whitened, so it looks that gay of a Saturday as parties 'as said as my 'ouse looked like a picter.

I will say as there's noble paintin's, certingly not as I 'olds with all on 'em, and I must say as that there lady as took and rode thro' the streets on 'er bare-back steed, as they calls it, didn't ought to be made a picter on, as must be werry 'urtful to the family's feelin's, tho' she is dead and

gone, and done it for a good motive, for to make 'er 'usban' spare them citizens' lives as come out a-bringin' of the keys of the church with a 'alter round their necks, as must 'ave been a brute for to let 'is own wife forget 'er sect like that, and I'm sure if Brown were a-goin' to 'ang the Lord Mare 'isself he might do it in welcome afore I'd go a-ridin' thro' the City in a state of nudity like that, as certingly never 'ad my 'air long enuf to cover me down to my feet, tho' below my waist afore eleven, as some did used to say made me weakly thro' all the strength a-goin' into the 'air, as is all rubbish escept when delicate, as pre'aps takin' off the tips may strengthen, and in course must be shaved arter a fever.

But as I were a-sayin', if Peepin' Tom were struck blind thro' 'is eye to a 'ole in the shetter jest to get a look at 'er, wotever ought to 'appen to that painter as took and drawed 'er unbeknown, poor thing, as is wot I calls takin' a mean advantage of 'er unpertected sitivation, tho' quite the lady I've 'eard say in all 'er ways.

There's one picter as I could stand and look at for ever, as is that there French Queen a-bein' brought to trial by them wretches in that there riverlution; she's something like a queen tho' no crown nor spectre, nor nothink but 'er plain white gownd, and them wile fieldmales a-insultin' on 'er,

as she didn't take no more notice on than the dirt under 'er feet, a-knowin' as they was a deal wiler, and as to them men as insulted and murdered 'er, in my opinion every Frenchman did ought to blush to think as ever their name was that disgraced.

There's a many lovely picters all about all manner, tho' some on 'em is 'ighly disgustin', partikler one where a 'eathen Turk 'ave been and cut off a negro black's 'ead, as is a gory mask on the floor, and give me quite a turn, and as I says, "Why-ever didn't that painter 'ave the place jest wiped up afore he took and did it, tho' pre'aps he were ordered to as a-warnin'," jest like they blowed them blacks from the guns over in Injy, as'll 'ave a nice tale to tell some day about Christian England's goin's on, as'll make us 'old our tongues about other people, leastways that's wot Mr. Arnot says, as is a great friend of Brown, and often drops in for 'is pipe and politics, as is things I don't care about, as gets quite warm over Injy, and says to me one evenin', "Did ever you 'ear speak of Warren 'Astin's."

I says, "Never," tho' I well remembers Warren's Blackin', 30, Strand, as stood jest where the Cherrin' Cross Railway is now, as drove a carridge and four across the Tems when it were froze over, and some preferred to Day and Martin."

I thought as that man would 'ave 'ad a fit

thro' a-larfin' and lettin' 'is baccy smoke go the wrong way, and Brown, he says, "Of all the rubbish a woman ever did talk, Martha, yours beats it," as made me feel that 'urt as I walked out of the room, and never come in no more till supper, cos I don't old with bein' cut short like that.

Wot I considers as a mull in them picters is the way as they mixes 'em all up together like, as some is werry solemn subjects out of Scripter, as did all ought to be kep' by theirselves, as would be a werry good thing to show of a Sunday, cos there's a many as if they can read ain't got neither time nor yet inclination for to do it, as might learn a deal by picters, as makes you feel that ser'ous, jest the same as sacred music on the orgin, as I'd rather listen to any day than a sermon myself, as werry often only aggrawates parties into contradictin' it, and we know werry well as some of them fine preachers ain't been able for to preach no morals into their own families, even tho' dukes and duchesses may go and 'ear 'em by the score, and they sets up ragged-schools for the children of the poor, as 'ad better be a-lookin' arter their own outcasts of sons at 'ome, as is a downright disgrace to 'uman natur' with their wile ways, as did ought to be 'ung.

But law I didn't 'arf enjoy them picters for a-lookin' out all the time for to see if I could ketch

sight of Mrs. Welbank, or any on 'em, cos I knowed as 'er good gentleman were to meet 'em along with Brown in the machinery, as I didn't like to go among alone, thro' bein' always that timbersome over it when in motion, thro' a-rememberin' 'ow many 'as been tore limb from limb thro' jest a-ketchin' in it in passin', the same as that sassige maker in Carnaby Market, as lost 'is life thro' not bein' able to untie 'is apron quick enough, as drawed 'im into the machine, as is why them little brass 'arts was invented, for to fasten a apron behind, and undone in a instant; tho' some say as he come to 'is sad end thro' a-wearin' of a blue coat and metal buttons in business, as don't look well for a butterman, nor yet any other trade in the shop, but preaps as well, thro' a leadin' to 'is detection, where some 'ave been chopped that fine as never to be known, any more than the man as fell into the wat of lye at the dyein' works, and nothink on 'im ever found but the clinkers of 'is boots; as was a satisfaction to 'is family; thro' bein' in course a comfort to know the wust, and not live in constant fear of 'is turnin' up, like Mrs. Cobbledick's 'usban', as went out to market one Saturday night out by Ratcliff 'Ighway, and was took by the press-gang, as they supposed, and never 'eard on agin, and 'er, poor soul, a-waitin' supper for 'im, and jumpin' up every knock at the door, and goin' aboard every ship as

come into the Dock, and lived and died in 'Igh Street, Poplar, over forty year in one 'ouse, and never would put on black for 'im, sayin' as she were sure he'd come back, and never shed a tear, tho' they do say as he led 'er a dog's life, and would give 'er the rope's end, thro' 'avin been a coxswain afore he took to a saw-pit, and pretty nigh killed his 'prentice, and every one said a good riddance, but for all that would 'ave been a satisfaction to 'ave knowed the wust, but left 'er werry comfortable, and no occasion to let lodgin's, as she did more for the pastime, thro' havin' no family, and died that respected as every shop put up a shetter both sides of the way the day she were berried, and left me arf her money, tho' no relation, but always 'ad fancied me from a gal, thro' my dear mother bein' 'er friend in trouble, and lettin' me stop with 'er, as certingly in my opinion lived in constant dreads as Cobbledick might turn up, though he never did, as 'ad a deal of trouble for to get 'old of 'is bit of property, but all come right in the hend, not as ever I espected any money from the old lady, nor nobody else, as 'ave all come to me unawares, as the sayin' is ; and made Mrs. Willin that savage me a-gettin' it, as said I were a reg'lar old money-grubbin' mould, a-workin' underground, as can put my 'and on my 'art, and declare solemn, as never in my life did I know what Mrs. Cobbledick were

wurth, and might 'ave knocked me down with a feather, as the sayin' is, when the lawyer walked in that mornin' for to tell me as them Counsels was mine, as is over ninety pounds a year, and if sold out would bring one hundred and fifty.

I must say as some of them picters didn't ought to be allowed, as I do not consider a party doin' of a post mortal, as they calls it, over a dead body is common decency, with 'is apron on, as give me quite a turn thro' 'avin' knowed parties as met their deaths over them things, thro' a knife a-slippin', and didn't ought for to be done in public like that, the same as all them murders and executions and sich like, as it would be far better for to draw a wail over, in my opinion, as is sickenin' sights.

But I suppose it's lookin' up so much as always makes me that tired in seein' picters, and my legs was downright a-givin' way under me, and jest then I see a openin' as led out on to that place, like a balcony as runs the length of the buildin', where there's chairs put to rest you, and glad I were to get one, thro' a feelin' as the time were come for me to take a somethink, thro' a sinkin' dreadful, if it only were my drops, as is reg'lar intervals, as I were obligated to make a guess at, thro' not bein' able to count 'em, as don't so much matter when it ain't deadly pison as you're a-takin', where a drop

too much might be your death, the same as lodnum or anythink like that.

There's one comfort over them picters, as is to think as they're all make-believe, cos in course nobody ever drawed them on the spot, partikler one of a poor sailor as 'ad been washed overboard a-clingin' to a mast, as give me quite a turn, thro' a-thinkin' of my own godfather as were lost at sea over five-and-twenty years ago, and may be a-floatin' about like that now, cos in course the sea-water would preserve 'im thro' bein' brine, as is a awful thought, not even to rest in your grave, tho' a watery one, as the sayin' is.

I set ever so long a-restin' in that balcony, I think I must 'ave took jest forty winks, as the sayin' is, thro' bein' dreadful tired, and not seen 'arf the place, for not only was there loads of picters to look at, but all manner, and some lovely lace to be sure, and other things in cases for to keep the dust off.

When I was rested a bit, I went on thro' more picters, and at last come to a place where there was the Inglish picters, as seems to be shoved out of the way, and certingly not much for to look at, but yet I stopped jest for to cast my eye over 'em, thro' not a 'oldin' with praisin' of heverythink forrin, and a-sneerin' at your own country, tho' I will praise wot I admires, for I always 'olds with givin' of a certing party 'is doo, as the sayin' is.

Certingly of all them painters the Belgiums is the best; leastways, as far as I'm any judge, and bless you the British ain't nowheres arter 'em, as I couldn't 'elp a-sayin', as is all a-owin', a gent were a-sayin', to our not 'avin' no school.

So I says, "Well, then, wotever is the use of that there place as they call the 'Cademy?"

"Ah!" he says, "wot, indeed!" he says, "you go there and you'll see more bad pictures than in any place of the same size in the world."

I says, "Escuse me, sir, as will not do no-think of the kind, thro' not a-'oldin' with bad pictures; and 'ave seen some werry fine ones in my time."

He was a werry nice old gent, as 'ad been a-restin' 'isself on a chair along with me in that place, jest outside where the picters is showed, as is a covered place, a-lookin' down on them gardins, as is werry fine, no doubt; but that formal as I don't 'old with, not for to enjoy yourself in.

So findin' as I were a-waitin' for my friends, he said as he were espectin' of 'is married daughter and 'er family, as was a dreadful sufferer with gout, and all 'is shoes cut for to give 'im ease.

"Ah!" I says, a-lookin' at 'im 'ard, "it's your liver as is wrong, for your eyeballs is yokes of eggs."

He says, "Then you're a bit of a doctor."

"Law," I says, "the parties as I've brought thro' jaunders nobody wouldn't credit; I do believe as baked lemons will do more good than all the medsins, and am pretty sure as Mrs. Goodall over near Kennington Oval, were killed by the mercury as they give 'er, thro' a ignorant feller bein' called in, and me a-gettin' there too late to stop 'is pranks, as 'ad sent 'er in doses enuf to sink a coal barge, a willan! and that's where it is as I 'olds with them 'omyopathy way, as don't give none of them pisons, but only little sugar-plums as couldn't 'urt a infant at the breast."

I asked that old gent wot he thought about them picters, as said they was werry much mixed.

"Ah!" I says, "no doubt a-comin' from abroad, as must be wuss than a-movin', where I'm sure your things gets into that confusion as I've found the kitchen things in the garret, and the bed-room in the washus myself."

"Ah!" he says, "the French can draw and paint too."

"Well," I says, "I certingly 'ave seen French women werry much painted, but not a bit wuss than many Hinglish, as took to turnin' of their 'air yaller, as don't look well, not even in a lunchin bar, where they all tries to look like sisters."

That old gent he pinted out a deal of things to me while we was a-settin' there, as he said was

all the potteries, and I should say a good many chimbley potteries.

Jest where we was a-settin' there was the amazin warse, as they called it, as that old gent showed me; but I couldn't see nothink amazin' in it, as well remembers a-seein' the Clarence Warse when I were young, all solid glass, so big as you 'ad to go upstairs to look inside it, as were showed in Bullock's Museum afore it were turned into the 'Gypshun 'All, as is where Albert Smith lived and died, as were the party as discovered Mount Blank, as I've see the top on myself, and don't look arf the 'ight as many others, as shows as you shouldn't never judge by appearances, as is deceitful.

Not a-wishin' to take a solid meal afore we was all together, I thought as I'd kill time by a-lookin' at the chaney, as is a wonderful quantity, but only wot you may see in shops any day, as is no doubt werry beautiful, but not worth a-comin' all the way to Brompton to see, nor yet to buy, for it's a reg'lar chaney shop and nothink else, as is all you can make on it.

I don't mean to say as there ain't lovely things in that Exhibition, but in my opinion it's a pity as they didn't open it next year, for it ain't near finished, and there's carpenters at work in it, and some of the passages is werry queery, not as it matters much, for they've been and put the

Hinglish picters there, as nobody don't care to look at.

They tries werry 'ard to sell that chaney, and some on it werry reasonable, as that old gent said; but, law, it ain't nothink to them like me, as 'ave seen Savers over in France, as did used to be lovely, and only 'opes as they ain't been and smashed it, the wretches, along with the Louver and the Toolerees, let alone that Pally Royal, as 'ad lovely things in the shops, tho' no doubt that Prince Napoleon, as they called 'im, took and carried off all as he could lay 'is 'and on there.

I must say as by the time I'd been and done that porsylaine, as is the French for chaney, I were pretty well done up, and as to that old gent, he'd been and turned back long afore; so I thought as I'd get somethink to eat, and asks where the refreshments was; but, bless you, they're arf a mile off pretty nigh, but when there werry nice cold meat and all manner, tho' I must say as two and thrippence weren't out of the way for wot I took, with only a pint bottle of stout, as was extra, thro' a-feelin' a nasty sinkin' as I felt a-comin' on; but certingly them waiters was that attentive as would 'ave fetched anythink, from weal and 'am pie to fore quarter of lamb, and werry nice salid, and one young gentleman come and asked me quite perlite if I were a-'avin' all as I wished, and told me as

there wos a werry nice shilling dinner give the other side, as I'm a-goin' to try another day, and only come into the two and thrippiny part a-thinkin' as I might find Mrs. Podder, as is a reg'lar happy cure, as the French says, over 'er meals, and always will 'ave the best, and would go to Buckin'am Pallis itself for a good dinner, as arn't wot every one can afford, and so it is as that Exhibition's been and provided for all pockets, as some ain't so deep as others, and I'm sure the perliteness as I got a-goin' out, I might 'ave been a duchess at the werry least, and for that matter, ow' was they to tell as I wasn't?

Bein' all alone, I didn't feel the 'art to go and 'ave a good 'ot dinner as I might 'ave, and only sixpence more; but I'm one of them as, when alone, don't care to 'ang over my meals, and was thankful when I'd took my quantum stuff, as Dr. Squills used to call it, and were off agin.

By that time I were a-feelin' rested, and wanted to 'ave a good look at that 'Merrykin harmour, as is close by the refreshments, and certingly well worth seein'; I never knowed as the 'Merrykins 'ad sich things, but there it all were, with the name wrote quite plain, and the werry harmour as King 'Enry wore when he went over there on 'orseback, a-ridin' full tilt, with 'is 'ead foremast and a pike in

'is 'and, as must be certing distraction to any one as he come in contract with, as all them kings was in the 'abit of doin' down to James the Second, as were the last lawful king as ever rained over us, as a werry nice stout party as stood there were a-tellin' me about, jest thro' me a-askin' 'im where to find it in the cattylog, as it's a job to make out.

I asked 'im what part of 'Merryker the harmour come from, and he says, "Bless the woman, wot's she thinking about?"

I says, "Sir, you'll escuse me, but," I says, 'I've been over there, and brought 'ome with me some pisoned bows and harrers, so knows well wot their ways of fightin' is, as it were, thro' usin' them, as old Gen'ral Washintub, as they calls 'im, got the better of King George, tho' in course King George could 'ave conkered if he'd 'ave liked to, only it weren't worth 'is while to go on a-fightin', and 'ave his sogers pisoned for that out-of-the-way overgrowed wilderness of a place, as 'ave been a werry great conwenience for us to send our troublesome customers to, and let's 'ope, now as Mr. Gladstone 'ave been and knocked under to 'em, they won't give us no more bother, 'cos I'm sure the world's wide enuf for us both, and tho' we mayn't love one another, as we never shall in this world, there ain't no occasions to come to blows.

Says that stout party, "It's a pity, mum, as you don't lecture on Woman's Rights."

I says, "Sir," I says, "I knows my place, and would thank you to keep yourn, and give your opinion when it's asked," and walks on, 'cos I see by 'is eye as he were a-jeerin' at me, and don't hold with talkin' to strangers, beyond a passin' of a remark, for that's 'ow Mrs. Parsins got 'ocussed, a-waitin' for the Turn'am Green coach at the Gooso and Gridiron, years ago, near St. Paul's, as were induced for to take a glass of ale along with a countryman and 'is wife, as said they was strangers to London, and never 'eard of again till the middle of the next day, when found without 'er senses, and wot she stood up in, under the dry arches of the Adelphi, and went out with 'er gold watch and chain on, and over a pound in 'er puss, intending to spend the day with her sister, close agin the Broadway, 'Ammersmith, as 'ad lived forewoman for years at a fringe-maker's near the Post Office, where the male coaches did used to start from on the King's birthday, in their new liveries, as always 'ad a tea-party, poor soul, to see 'em, and died in the alms 'ouses somewhere's over the water.

So I'm always that careful over speakin' to strangers, besides I didn't want to, thro' my intentions bein' called to all them men in harmours, as is some on 'orseback and some agin the wall,

and 'owever they could bear them shirts made of wire like, I can't think, as must be hagony to wear, let alone strikin' that dreadful cold. But law, them 'Merrykins will do anythink, partikler if you tells 'em as they didn't ought to. Not but I'd wear anythink as would be a safeguard agin bein' shot or run thro' with one of them long lancets, as makes one thankful as we ain't a-livin' in them days as were a word and a blow, with the blow come fust, as the sayin' is.

There was parties talkin' a deal of foolishness, I considers, in their remarks, and one young feller kep' on a-sayin' as we should soon want harmour, or somethink for to improve our harmy, as were a-goin' to rapid decay, and if a enemy was to inwade us, we should be took and conkered wuss than the French.

So, I says, "Escuse me a jinin' in, but," I says, "if I was a young man I should blush to own it, and all I've got to say is, that it's a nice disgrace for any one to say such things, as looks as if they wished it."

"Oh!" he says, "you're a bigoted, bloated old Tory.

I says, "If that's your langwidge, I don't want to say no more," and walks on, not a-listenin' to 'em, thro' bein that took up with them harmours, as is jest for all the world like the Tower of London, as 'ave been there myself, and see it 'ung up there,

ever since Queen Bess throwed it off in a rage, as wore it constant, the same as Oliver Cromwell, under 'er clothes, thro' bein' afraid of sassination, as well they might both be, a couple of cruel wretches, for to go and murder parties in cold blood like that."

It's certingly werry kind of that there 'Merrykin to lend us all the harmour, leastways to lend it to that there Intynational, not as I sees as it does anybody any good, as 'ave got them things to keep 'em, as is nothink but the dog in the mangy, as the sayin' is, for in course it ain't no pleasure to any one to 'ave them things about the 'ouse, as I should consider orful lumber, a-'arborin' dust, but in course it's a pleasure to show 'em, and 'ear parties a-sayin', "Well, I never," "Law, you don't say so," when you're a-tellin' em about it.

But as to that harmour, I can't think 'ow any man could stand up in it, and that's why they took to 'orseback, no doubt, and it must be a strong 'orse as can bear a man all shet up in a iron case like that, and 'ow any one could fight in it I can't think, as am sure I never could use my arms free with all them iron plates back and front, as must 'ave got red 'ot with the sun a-shinin' on you.

In course it's all werry well for to wear one of them 'elmets on your 'ead, tho I'm sure I never

could 'ave bore the weight, nor yet anythink tied down over my ears that tight as never could bear even a black beaver bonnet myself, as is a joke to one of them great iron pots, tho' in course a great protection agin them harrers as come flyin' about you like takin' a wasps'-nest, as will sting you almost thro' anythink, but in a battle must 'ave been a dreadful 'eat, and not always much use, cos look at William Rufus as were shot in the eye for all that, as in course couldn't see where he were a-goin' to, nor where the harrers was a-comin', so jest took a peep, I suppose, as proved fatal to 'im in a crack, as the sayin' is.

It's a mussy as they wore them leather jerkins, as they calls 'em, under that harmour, tho' some wore it over their buff, as must 'ave pinched 'em dreadful I should say, and 'ave struck fearful cold, as is give up now, cos in course no use agin a cannon-ball a-comin' slap at you, and them shells as busts all over the place.

Wot I likes harmour for is, as it's like boxin'-gloves, and shows which is the best man, for as to a battle now-a-days, wotever is the use of men a-goin' out to fight as can be all knocked over long and long afore they even comes in sight of their henemies, as can kill 'em with ease six miles off, and might be the hend of any one a-walkin' round the gardin peaceful, or even a-drinkin' tea in a har-

bour, the same as Mr. Bellamy, as lived out near St. Helena Gardins, and were werry nigh pinned to 'er own flower-bed thro' a rocket stick a-comin' down slap on 'er back as she were a-stoopin' to gether a bit of small salid for supper, thro' one or two a-droppin' in full late, and 'er a-wishin' to cut a good figger.

But bless your art, it's no use a-talkin', things will go on adwancin' till they takes and destroys the world with their inwentions, as I'm sure that petroleum didn't ought to be allowed, as is a reg'lar dewourin' elefant, as the sayin' is, and a-comin' up out of the werry bowels of the earth, is in course full of all them inflammable things as'll esplode in a jiffey, and I must say as I think gas is a-goin' quite far enuf, and never wouldn't even allow camphine in my kitchen tho' a great temptation to the poor thro' bein' a good light as well as cheap, but as to any one a-ironin' by it with the lamp a-standin' on a bason turned down with three books on it, why it's downright madness, as it proved on Pentonwille 'Ill to that poor soul as were blowed to atoms, and then burnt to hashes in less than no time, afore she 'ad time to raise the alarm, not as it would 'ave been any good, for before ever the injins can get there the mischief's done, and the 'ouse gutted from the kitchen to the garrets, as is such a thing to spread like wildfire, as the sayin' is.

I'm sure I'd took a werry mild sort of a meal, as I considers cold meat never werry satisfying, and lays 'eavy with me in the general way, so 'ad a little somethink 'ot arter I took and wandered thro' that harmour, and don't believe as I could 'ave smelt that strong of sperrits as to escuse Mrs. Welbank a-sayin' to me as we met suddin jest at the outside of it, "Well, I'm sure, Mrs. Brown, you ain't forgot the rum, and you're a nice one to keep us a-waitin' about for 'ours, arf famished, with you a-settin' a-guttlin' and a-guzzlin' all the while."

I says, "Mum, I do not understand your remarks about rum, as were only Scotch whiskey, as I'd thank you for to keep for them as likes 'em, and as to waitin', it's me as considers as I've been deserted base, and even my own 'usban' kep' away from me."

Says Mrs. Podder, a-wheezin' werry 'ard, "I'm sure no one's kep' your 'usband', as is stuck to that there machinery, and not a word to throw at a dog, as is no doubt where you'll find 'im, not as ever he s missed you."

I says, "I'm not a-goin' to waste breath on you, and should adwise you to keep all as you've got for yourself, as ain't got none to spare," and turns off to go to that machine part for to find Brown, as 'ad forgot all about 'is sayin' as I should find 'im there, thro' bein' that put out by the way

as Mrs. Padwick 'ad been and left me, as were not like 'er for to desert a friend, cos as to them two from the country they wasn't no loss, indeed I were glad to be out of their way as was always a-pesterin' me with questions, and then that rude as is country ways, either a-contradictin' or else a-bustin' out larfin when I told 'em anythink, and only wish as my gal Liza 'ad been able to come up, as she will do in September, and then I shall 'ave it all at my fingers' ends, as the sayin' is.

I never could a-bear a-goin' where there was machinery a-workin' and flyin' about, and that's why, tho' I looked into that there workshop, that I didn't care about goin' along it, as might ketch the tail of your gownd in a cogwheel, or break your arm, the same as Old Godden, a-standin' next a crane in the London Docks, as the 'andle on turned round on 'im all of a suddin and broke 'is arm to splinters in a instant, and went about with a 'ook to 'is dyin' day; as was werry useful to 'im in landin', thro' bein' a lighterman, but werry unpleasant when he would ketch 'old on your arm by it, sometimes for a spree, and once took and 'ooked the sleeve of my gownd out clean at the arm 'ole, as in course I took in good part, out of respect for 'is affliction, but don't want to feel the effects on it any more than a party in them picter galleries, as walked with a crutch, and put it down on my toe, and then give

a turn on it like a pivot turnin' round to speak, as made me jump back that wiolent, with a yell as sent two parties as was walkin' behind me sprawlin' backards and me on 'em, and made that confusion as a perlice come up and says to me, "You should move gentle in a crowd, bein' that size as you are, as might 'ave upset one of them stands with dreadful damidges."

I says, "Perliceman," I says, "size ain't nothink to do with it, as knowed a party myself over eight-and-twenty stun as would jump on the dinner-table without 'is shoes, when the dessert were laid, and dance all among the things and not break a glass; escept one day as the table weren't properly bolted, and give way in the middle with 'im, as brought down the chandyleer, as he clung to for to save 'isself." So I says, "Don't talk about size nor weight neither to me."

Says the perliceman, "That's right, that is; but don't set 'ere in the middle of the floor, cos you're a-stoppin' the way."

I says, "In course I'm a-goin' to get up, but," I says, "wotever you do, don't pull at me by the harms, as might come out; in course I means my dress, as I bought made up, so can't answer for the work."

He was werry civil that perlice, as called a man to 'elp 'im, and thro' a-puttin' their 'ands under

my harms, got me on to my feet as light as a feather, as the sayin' is, and no 'arm done either. As is the reason as I were that late in gettin' to Brown, and went along by them machines that careful feelin' the 'eat werry much, and the smell of ile werry unpleasant, tho' in course they must grease their wheels, as the sayin' is.

It's a wonder to me as they don't make more things than they wants with all them wheels a-turnin' and leather straps a-flyin', and if anyone didn't show you, no one would believe as carpets was made like that, as seems to be nothink but strings a-'angin' down, as I should 'ave liked for to watch more closer, as there's a deal of 'anky panky a-goin' on no doubt; but I couldn't make it out alone, and didn't choose to ask no questions, partikler as don't fancy goin' near no machinery, tho' they certingly 'ave brought it to wonderful perfection, as the sewin' machine will tell you, a-workin' button 'oles and all, as is a thing as not one needlewoman in a dozen can do properly; not to say embroidery and tambour work down to nittin'

There's no tellin' where that machinery's a-goin' to stop, for there's machines for heverythink, from nittin' up to steam rollers, as can crush rocks and mountings, and light the gas in a instant, and consume your own smoke, with a fire injin'as could drown a 'ole town in 'arf a 'our, and defy it to burn arter

that; and then there's 'orse shoes as can be put on without nailin', as I always will never believe it must 'urt, to 'ave a nail drove like that thro' your 'oof, tho' it may be 'orny. And then there's pyrometers, and barerometers, and semypores, hydererstatics, and all sorts of steam ingins by the score; as I read about in the cattylog arterwards; but never see a thousandth part on 'em, and jest as well as I didn't, for I shouldn't never 'ave made out wot they was meant for, and don't believe as they are any good, but parties likes to try their 'ands on makin' 'em, the same as young Bayfoot, as 'ad a turnin' lathe, and took and turned 'is mother everythink as she could think on, from a bed-post to a nutmeg-grater, as is both 'andy things in a family; and he certingly did ought to, for she were a good mother to 'im, and bought him that lathe, as he called it, out of 'er savin's; so in course one good turn deserves another, as the sayin' is.

Not as I'm fond of them things for boys to dabble in, for poor young Wheeler he went and caught the tips of his fingers in a mowin' machine down at 'is uncle's as cut 'im to the quick, as the sayin' is.

Talk about two sticks bein' cross, why they ain't nothink to wot Brown were when I did see 'im at last, as were a-standin' a-lookin' at a patent steam-

condenser, as if he'd been glued to it, as were close on five o'clock, and begun at me a-sayin' as two at the latest were my time to meet 'im. "Not," says he, "as I've missed you, for," he says, "the things I've see 'ere is worth all the wives in the world."

"Ah!" I says, "I sees wot it's a-comin' to, as will be all machinery pretty soon, and parties as works 'ard for a bit of bread will 'ave it took out of their mouths by machinery, and left to starve, with their children reduced to the parish, and I should like to see the machinery as'll support them."

Says Brown, "Martha, don't make a fool of yourself a-talkin' that rubbish; why we should all be starvin' but for machinery."

"Yes," I says, "I've 'eard say as there's a deal of machine-made bread."

"Ah!" says Brown, "nearly all the bread is made now-a-days by machinery." He says, "Come and look at this steam-mule."

"Ah!" I says, "no doubt there must be machinery to keep a mule to 'is work, as is that dreadful obstinate as beatin' ain't no good."

Some parties as was a-standin' by bust out a-larfin', as in course I didn't notice thro' Brown a-pullin' on me to come and see that mule, as weren't a live hanimile at all, but certingly a thing

as walked backwards and for'ards as if it was alive, a-spinnin' of worsted into threads.

Then there was machines for combin' the wool, as I 'adn't never 'eard on, tho' I've often 'eard speak on, and see wrote up, "'Air-brushin' by machinery," as is a thing I don't 'old with and wouldn't 'ave done, for there was poor old Mr. Plunket as 'ad 'is 'n done somewheres in the City, as they took and tore it out by 'an'fuls, and left 'im as bald as a pig in two minits thro' the machine a-bein' out of order, and a mussy as he didn't 'ave 'is 'ead dragged out by the roots.

There's machines in that Exhibition for doin' everythink with wool, from the sheep's back to stair-carpetin', as I see bein' made with my own eyes at one end, and the raw wool a-layin' at the other, as they washes, and dries, and combs, and twists, and spins, and weaves all by machinery; and young women a-workin' at some and men at others, as was wonderful civil, but I couldn't 'elp a-thinkin' all the time wotever 'll be the use of 'uman bein's in a year or two more I don't know, when everythink is sure to be done by steam, as will supersede us all.

Arter a bit I says to Brown, "Talkin' of steam, I'm a-goin' to 'ave a cup of tea, as is wot it all sprung from, in a werry nice place as I spotted down there."

Brown says, "'Ang tea, I wants to 'ave a look round."

I says, "I'm sorry as I've troubled you to wait for me, Mr. Brown, as can find my way 'ome; and if ever you ketches me a-comin' out with that chawbacon of a Mrs. Welbank, or that old porpus of a Mrs. Podder, agin, a couple of 'Amsher 'ogs, you may tell me on it."

I see Brown look werry foolish like, and 'urry away, so turns round, and if there wasn't them two fieldmales as 'ad follered me a-standin' at my helber.

Says Mrs. Podder, with a toss of 'er 'ead, "When you wants to see a porpus, mum, look at 'ome."

"And as to comin' out with Mrs. Welbank," says the other, a-chimin' in, "when you've paid 'er for your railway and hentrance, then, preaps, you'll turn on 'er, and insult 'er with your chawbacons and 'Amsher 'ogs."

"Well," I says, "I've said it, and ain't a-goin' to eat up my words for nobody, as do think it werry rude of you for to walk off and leave any one alone all day for to be a-wanderin' about this 'ere place jest like a Jew all over the world, and never felt more lonesome; and as to your money, take it out of that," I says, and 'olds out my 'and with some silver in it.

She says, "Go to Bath with your silver," and gives my 'and a knock up, and sends the money a-flyin', as was over four-and-sixpence.

I never did feel more inclined to give any one my umbreller over 'er 'ead, and do think I should but for a perliceman as 'ad picked up the money as come up and says, "This 'ere sort of thing wont do 'ere, I wonder you ain't ashamed of yourself; leave your quarrels at 'ome;" and he says, a-turnin' to Mrs. Welbank, "Take care of your mother, for I can see as she's ready to drop," and pints to Mrs. Podder a-rithin' in agonies, tho' she wouldn't own it, as 'ad new boots on I know'd.

I couldn't 'elp a-bustin' out a-larfin' thro' a-knowin' as Mrs. Podder couldn't abear to be thought holder than Mrs. Welbank, tho' there's seven year atween them thro' different mothers.

She turned on me like a fiery faggit for fury, a-sayin' as I were a-tipplin' old toad, and did ought to be turned out, and then busted into tears as ended in 'er bein' carried in sterrics into the ladies' waitin'-room, as I didn't choose to foller 'er to, but thro' bein' near upon six, made my way to the hentrance as were the nearest way hout, done out of my tea, as 'ad turned to rain, and took the wrong turnin' to the railway, and walked ever so far afore I found it out, and 'ad to take a cab arter all, as wouldn't take me under 'arf-a-crown, and when I

got to Mrs. Padwick's found as she'd been 'ome ever since two, and in bed with a bad sick 'eadache, as come on in the lift, and not able to do nothink but set in the waitin'-room, as is 'ow I come to miss 'em, but no occasions for Mrs. Podder to be that insultin' and a-gettin' 'er son to write to Mrs. Padwick for to say as she could never cross the threshold where I was, as she didn't consider no lady, and all manner like that.

When Brown come in for to fetch me 'ome he wasn't in no rage, but one of 'is 'eavy 'umers, as never spoke a word about it till the next mornin', and give me such a-talkin' to about lettin' my tongue run on, and wrote a beautiful letter as filled a ole sheet of paper for Mrs. Padwick to show Mrs. Podder, with my polergies for a-forgettin' myself, as I certingly did in usin' them terms, as I didn't mean nothink by 'Amsher 'og, but 'it Mrs. Podder werry 'ard thro' a-comin' from 'Amsher 'erself, as in course nobody wouldn't like to be twitted with, as the sayin' is, tho' I'm sure for my part I don't mind bein' called a cockney, as I glories in it, for there never was and never will be sich a place to live in as London all over the world in my opinion.

As to that there Exhibition, it's all werry fine, and lots of things as is no doubt the seven wonders of the world, as the sayin' is, but wot I misses

about it is the coo-dool, for 'owever grand a place may be, it ain't no use if you can't get a sight on it all at once, and that there Halbert 'All is no doubt werry large, but it's a dismal place for to go in at, and gives you a chill like the moment you're in at the door instead of a-bustin' on you sudden enuf to take your breath away, as is wot I likes to see when goin' a sight-seein', as is werry improvin' to the mind for to see them wonders, and worth all the books as ever was wrote, as I might read for ever and not understand 'arf as much as there is in that Exhibition, and all I wants is to see all them improvements about the streets as stands in need on em, partikler the cabs and busses, and all railway accidents done away, and no more fightin' and quarrelin', and then the world will be werry different to wot it is, and parties have some pleasure in seein' them 'alls of harts.

As to them things makin' people better, and tho' pre'aps wiser every day, is wot I never espects to see in my time, nor yet my great grandchildren neither, but there's no 'arm a-tryin' to make people understand heverythink, and that's why I certingly do 'old with them as set up the Halbert 'All.

For my part I wonder as any one can take all that trouble to build them places and to make all them things, as is only sure to come to ruins the same as Rome and all them other old hancient

spots; not as Halbert 'All will ever last like Rome, thro' not bein' built in a day, as the sayin' is, nor yet that solid, as is only lath and plaster arter all, and run up jest for a time, and no doubt will be like the staty in Lester Square, with nobody a-carin' a straw about it, and that's why I considers it foolishness to lay out a lot of money on them memorials, as is all werry well for a momentum of anybody, but who'll care about it in a 'underd years, not as that would do to hact upon, cos there wouldn't be no tombstones nor nothink done.

I must say as I think it's plenty to pay sixpence jest to walk thro' them gardins, as ain't nothink remarkable, and too much built in like for the things to thrive; not but wot Brompton always were famous for market gardins, as a good many belonged to Gunter, as is a pastrycook, and somewheres at the West-end, as always gives them grand breakfasts when the nobilitys gets married, as I'm glad to 'ear as Miss Burdett Coutts 'ave done at last, and wishes 'er all 'appiness, as she well deserves, tho' in course tho' 'er 'usban' may be a lord he won't never be nobody compared to 'er, as 'ave made bishops jest like Queen Wictoria 'erself, and built churches for nearly hevery religion, thro' bein' that liberal.

I was a-sayin as much over tea one evenin' at Mrs. Padwick's, and that Mrs. Welbank takes me up

short, a-sayin' as Miss Coutts 'ad been made a lady, and not married to a lord at all.

"Well," I says, "preaps you're right, but it's werry strange to me, and werry like a single ooman bein' called Missus when too old to be called Miss, as made Mrs. Plummet fly out as is esactually 'er circumstances."

She says, "As she was not called Missus thro' years, but bein' Matron to the Mackintosh Infirmary, thought it sounded better."

"Well," I says, "and that's no doubt as Miss Coutts thinks 'My Lady' sounds better than Miss, as is rollin' in riches."

Says Old Portell, as lives next door to Mrs. Padwick, and 'ave been a clerk or somethink to a bank, "Wot do you know about 'er riches?"

I says, "Nothink, escept as she does a deal of good with 'em, as 'ave 'eard a deal about 'er, and remembers 'er grandmother well a-settin' in a white bonnet, a-lookin' out of the winder in Pickerdilly, as my dear mother pinted out to me when quite a gal, as 'ad been a actress in the name of Mellon, and died a duchess arter she berried old Coutts, thro' a marryin' a dook, as 'adn't a feather to fly with, and did used to live up somewheres by 'Ighgate way, as they do say the least said about the better."

Old Portell he flies in a reg'lar rage, and says,

"Oh! you're werry wise you are, and preaps can tell us a deal more about everybody."

I says, "Preaps I could tell you more than you'd like to listen to."

He says, "I can't abear gossipin'."

I says, "Can't you? well," I says, "for my part I don't mind a-talkin' about parties as 'ave made theirselves that conspicuous afore all the world, tho' I do not 'old with a-pryin' into private family affairs; but," I says, "all as I've been talkin' about that were public property, and were in the newspapers; and they do say old Coutts married 'er the werry day as 'is fust wife died, and the clergyman 'ad 'is gownd stripped off for doin' it, and serve 'im right, as were a disgrace to 'is cloth, as the sayin' is, tho' in course it were only fair as that party as got 'im into the trouble should prowide for 'im for life, as she did, and died jest about the time as King William the Fourth, and that's 'ow as this ere one come into the money, thro' bein' a dorter of Old Sir Francis Burdett, as were a reg'lar Chartist in 'is day, and did used to be returned for Westminster, with a reg'lar riot in Common Gardin; as I've 'eard lots of folks talk about, as were that liberal as he wanted every one to be equal, but I never 'card as he took and shared all his property with the poor, and lived like a poor man."

"It is enuf to make a cat larf," I says, "to 'ear

about lords and sich like, a-talkin' to workin' men as if they'd rather be workin' men theirselves, and give up all their fine 'ouses and lands, with 'orses and carridges, and work for their daily bread."

Whyever the workin' men should be sich fools as to listen to 'em I can't think, cos in course them swells is only 'umbuggin' 'em, and I know I should say to any lord as talked that way to me, "My Lord, you must either be a fool yourself or else take me for one to talk sich a parcel of rubbish, as is downright insults to any one with sense in their 'eads."

Says Old Portell, "I tell you as that old duchess weren't no relation to this 'ere Lady Coutts."

"Well," I says, "I knows that, only 'er grandfather's widder as ain't no disgrace to 'er, thro' not bein' the fust nor yet won't be the last as 'ave 'ad a grandfather as she ain't no call to be proud on, but," I says, "any 'ow she's tried to do good with 'er money as he left 'er, tho' if she'd 'ave asked me I should 'ave told 'er as were a-throwin' it away out Shoreditch way over that there Columbier Market as the parties as lives about there would rather lay out their money in the stalls and sich like, and as to gettin' up a 'andsome market with all them rules and regulations, it was werry like makin' a dog's bed for 'im as likes to scratch it up for 'im-

self, or gettin' clean water for the ducks as prefers to dabble in the dirty.

Brown he always said as it were a noble job for them architecters and builders, and did good for trade; and talkin' of markets, I'm sure that Common Gardins a disgrace, and that dook as keeps it did ought to be made build it up proper, and not charge them rents for sich dog-'oles as some of the shops is, as in course keeps up the price of fruit and wegetables so dreadful 'igh.

In course I didn't feel as I could see that there Exhibition any more than any one else at a glance like, so says to Mrs. Padwick as we'd go on the quiet, with none of your lifts nor yokels to upset any one.

She says, "I certingly will go, for I'm a-dyin to see that there French Annecks as they've been and opened."

"Ah!" I says, "I don't 'old with them Annecksings, as is wot them Merrykins is so fond on, and will be their distraction as I've 'eard a many say as that Exhibition's too big already."

Says Brown, "I should think you've 'ad enuf on it."

I says, "I wouldn't go agin with you not if Queen Wictoria were to horder me to, for," I says, "you're a deal too knowin' for me, as likes to look at things my own way."

"Yes," says Brown, "and that's bottom uppermost."

I says, "Mr. Brown, I'd thank you to remember as you're a-talkin' to a lady, and afore ladies."

Says Mrs. Padwick, "Never mind, Martha, we'll go, and as I'm sure must know your way about jest like your own 'ome for the deal as you've see on it, and able to tell me about."

"Well," I says, "to tell you the truth I'm that bewildered over that Halbert 'All as I don't 'ardly know now wot I 'ave seen and wot I 'aven't, tho' I remembers a deal about it as were that lovely, tho' if you was to take and ask me wot I 'adn't seen, no doubt it would fill a book."

"Yes," says young Pettigrew, as is own nephew to Mrs. Padwick by marridge, "it's for all the world like chay oss come agin."

I says, "Esactually," not as I see the pint myself, but he's werry clever and in course struck 'im like a chay oss thro' bein' prenticed to a wetinary surgin, and brought Mrs. Kendall's spanel back from death's door, as the sayin' is.

That young Pettigrew, he esplained a good many things as was in that Exhibition over a cup of tea at Mrs. Padwick's, as wouldn't never 'ave struck me, as shows wot it is to be well brought up and edicated, partikler in lookin' at them machinery, as is all Latin and Greek to me; but some seems to

take to it nat'ral, as is proved by the things as is made by the blind, and deaf and dumb, as in course can't be edicated, let alone them young thieves in the Reformatories, as in course can't 'ave been well brought up, tho' I 'ave known young people turn out bad for all the pains as their parents 'ave took with 'em; for there was poor Mrs. Badeley, she were that strict with 'er three boys, never lettin' 'em play a game with no companions, nor nothink but chapel two evenin's a week and three times a Sunday, as turned out reg'lar reprobates, and robbed both mother and grandmother afore they ended in the 'Ulks, as was their just rewards, the willins a-darin' to beat their old uncle, as 'ad been like a father to 'em, when in 'is second childhood; as is black baseness, and will come to be 'ung afore they're done, not as it's the waggerbones as gets 'ung now-a-days, but only them as 'ave got no friends to get 'em off.

Next mornin' me and Mrs. Padwick went on the quiet early in a cab, and met young Pettigrew, as is the easiest way arter all, and no crowd nor nothink, not as that Exhibition ever is crowded, but no doubt will be now as them scursion trains is a-beginnin', as will bring parties up for next to nothink, as the sayin' is; and I'm sure I shan't go when they comes in droves, so was glad to 'ave it over.

Certingly that French annecks is werry beauti-

ful, and French all the world over, wot with one thing and the other, and not that there Lewy Napoleon stuck up at every corner, like over in Paris, as were enuf to make you sick.

They sells all the things, and I see a party a-buyin' of a jug as I see by 'is 'at were a bishop, thro' a little black rosette in the front on it and gaiters to match. So I says to Mrs. Padwick, "If I were a bishop I'd buy somethink better than that."

Says young Pettigrew, "Poor feller, it's a wonder as he've got the money to come 'ere at all," and went on for to tell us as he were a Irish harchbishop as 'ad been disendowdied, and brought down to nothink now, as must be 'ard with a wife and family a-'angin' on to you; and 'ad a 'eavy-'arted look about 'im, poor man, and spoke that dismal as I couldn't 'elp a-feelin' for 'im, tho' Brown does go on agin 'em all that wiolent.

There was a many pretty things among the French, but you could see with 'arf a eye as pride 'ad 'ad a fall, and only one little place as they could fill; as made Mrs. Padwick feel disappointed, cos she'd read somewheres in the paper as the French was a-goin' to send over all their grand things out of the Louver for us to take care on, as in course were all fudge.

So I says, "They sends us over all their rubbish

as they wants to get rid on, like them Bonyparties, but ketch 'em sendin' us anythink worth 'avin'."

Says young Pettigrew, "There's a talk about restorin' 'im."

I says, "They only wants to do that for to finish up their foolishness, as will end in the Germans a-comin' and takin' 'em altogether, and reg'lar wipin' 'em out; but," I says, "don't let's talk about 'em, for they're enuf to make any one sick with their brutal ways and foolishness together."

We went to see a good many picters up one flight of stairs, as was most on 'em as I'd seen afore; and then we walked all round till we come to the refreshments, as we took, werry nice 'ot roast beef and beer, as they calls second class, but quite fust class enuf for me, and delicious stout, as is wot you requires to keep you up; and then arter that we went into the 'Ung'ry part, as is nat'rally next to the refreshments, and werry lovely things them 'Ung'ry people makes, as is drove to it, no doubt thro' want. Lovely picters, and jewels, and baccy-pipes, and glasses, as shows as they're thirsty as well as 'ungry over there.

There was lovely pianers as a young lady set down on one and played that beautiful as I could 'ave listened for ever, and then we see the place as they've got for breedin' fish, not as I can believe as them little fish as you sees in them glass

cases will ever grow to be porpuses and wails, as is all about the place, and stuffed beasts a-gorin' and a-tearin' one another to bits.

We come to one part where they was a-sellin' them forrin beers, as you wouldn't ketch me a-tastin' thro' a-knowin' it both in Merryker and on the Continong, as is wot I calls a mockery, and would rather drink water myself, tho' it is a thing as it's as much as my life's worth to touch, a doctor once told me.

Young Pettigrew he 'ad a glass mug on it, and said it were agreeable, but he's pretty near a tea-totaler, and 'ave see 'im put water to that there rubbishin' French wan ordinaire, as I calls rot.

It's werry pleasant along there, so we stopped and rested a bit thro' bein' open to the gardins, as looked werry fresh arter the showers as we'd 'ad, and then we goes along and upstairs to a place as was full of more picters, as I were glad to 'ear most on were Inglish, cos there was some on 'em fine paintin's, with lots of lovely things besides a-standin' about, as it's a pity you can't see more on 'em at once, cos at fust you thinks it's a mean place thro' bein' nearly all cut up in passages.

I couldn't 'elp a-feelin' for all them poor painters as 'ave done sich lots of picters and can't sell 'em, as shows it's a bad trade, and not 'arf the money to be got by it as 'ouse paintin', as in course 'as to be done every year or two, but when you come to 'ang

a picter up in your room, and keep it well dusted, why in course it don't get shabby like the walls.

I've know'd painters myself as was dreadful 'ard up, and took on terrible if their picters weren't 'ung, as there weren't no consolin' 'em over it, as I tried to one young feller as lodged with me, as took and cut 'is picter up with 'is razor in a rage, tho' he'd been and spent two pounds over a real gold frame, as made me stare when the broker only offered me 'arf a-crown for it, as was left behind, poor feller, arter he died, and I think as I 'eard say as wot they called 'is sketches, sold for over twenty pounds, as were sent to 'is mother in Jersey.

He didn't owe me nothink, poor dear, and went away to die at Margit with a broken art, and that's why I always 'ates that 'Cademy lot as give 'im them awful disappintment, not as he were ever strong, tho' a cheerful art, for he'd larf fit to kill 'isself when I'd be a-tellin' 'im things as wasn't no larfin' matters, as the sayin' is; as I'm sure it weren't when the gas esploded in the back kitchen and blowed me into the coal-'ole, as he took and made a drawin' of, tho' not much like me thro' a-makin' me too stout.

I never did care much about them marble statties as I've see lots on over in Hitaly, as preaps is nat'ral as they should go about arf naked where it's so 'ot, but ain't at all suitable for Ingland, and I

don't care about it myself, not but wot there's some beautiful 'eads as they calls busts all about.

Law, there was the picter of Wan Ambug in the lions' den, as Queen Wictoria were that fond on as she went to see 'em fed, and 'as 'ad 'is picter painted at Drury Lane Theayter, as is why she were called the Lady of Lions, thro' of course the lion bein' the British beast; not but wot I'm glad as they ain't at large about the place as they did used to be, as it wouldn't never be safe for any one to go about.

I must say as I considers it werry presumpteous in that Wan Ambug to go into that den 'isself, as might 'ave made short work on 'im the same as the man as put 'is 'ead in the lion's mouth, and then 'ollered out, "Do he wag 'is tail?" as the lion swallered like a oyster, as were all thro' 'is foolishness, cos whyever oller out like that, as were puttin' it into the lion's 'ead to eat 'im, as mightn't 'ave thought of it if he 'adn't been reminded.

Not but wot it shows a proper sperrit in Queen Wictoria not to be afraid of a lion, nor yet a unicorn neither for that matter, as some parties says isn't nothink but the rhinoceros, but no more like 'im than I am, as is a ugly brute, tho' a deal tamer than he did used to be in the Jewlogical Gardins, as in course 'ave got used to it, the same as Queen Wictoria to lions and unicorns thro' 'avin' of 'em about

'er all 'er life; as they do say it's a good plan for to use children not to be frightened at nothink, but yet I don't 'old with them a-goin' near wild beasts, and wouldn't let none of mine ever pat a strange dog, as is uncertin tempers and may be 'ungry or tired, as I'm sure makes the best on us snappish.

I must say as every time I got 'ome from that Exhibition I felt thankful as I didn't live there, as wouldn't suit me all that whirl for everlastin', not as it's anythink to them two others as I see, nor yet them two over in Paris, as was wonderful grand to be sure, and one can't 'ardly believe as not only is that all gone and past, but that there Lewy Napoleon as were 'oldin' 'is 'ead that 'igh, 'ave come to be nobody, and thankful now to 'ave a excursion wan stop afore 'is 'ouse and give 'im a cheer as he come out in the front quite thankful for to receive it, as in my opinion if he were a reg'lar bred 'un would 'ave kep' 'isself in the background, as the sayin' is.

Not but wot it is meant well by them men as is out for a 'olliday to give 'im a cheer in passin' now he's down in the world, cos they say he were always the friend to Ingland, but I can't never forget the way as he got 'isself made Umpire over there, tho' others 'ave preaps done quite as bad; yet we did ought to remember as two blacks don't make a white, as the sayin' is; and as to bein' friend to

Ingland, he knowed werry well it was 'is interest to be, cos if 'is old uncle 'ad been, Ingland wouldn't 'ave kicked 'im out of France as it did.

Wot I can't abear to look at is all them bullet and cannon balls and things as they calls improvements in war, and only means as they'll kill more people, as seems werry shockin' as parties should set at 'ome a workin' away at them instruments of distraction, as I'm sure is awful to think of the widders and orfins as they'll make; but in course it ever was so, and will be to the end, only I think as them things is out of place bein' showed at a Exhibition as is for encouragin' men to be more civilized and not go a-murderin' of their fellow-creeturs; and 'ow them Kings and Hempires can lay their 'eads on their pillers of a night and not dream of the misery as they've caused in the world; and all for wot, I should like to know?

But, law! as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Padwick, it's no use a-talkin' nor a-preachin', for parties will go on their own ways, and never thinkin' of any one but theirselves in this world, as brings all the misery, and not all the Exbibitions as ever was thought on wont't do away with, 'cos we're most on us a bad lot, as is werry proud of our fine doin's, and werry amiable till we come to 'ave our pockets touched, and then flies out like wild beasts; and it's werry fine to talk of Exhibitions improvin' of us,

but all as it really means is money as makes the mare to go, all the world over, as the sayin' is, whether it's a Exhibition or only a private shop, as you can find plenty of lovely things in, and not 'arf so confusin' to the 'ead nor tirin' to the feet.

I ain't, in course, got no fault to find with that there Exhibition, if only I could get to see it, for I've been and wandered up and down them long passages, but ain't never come to the Exhibition yet, as I asks a perliceman the way into it, as stares and says, "Why, it's all about."

"Ah," I says, "I sees; not finished yet. Then all these fine things is left a-standin' about 'ere till that Halbert 'All is ready for 'em to be put in, as is a thousand pities."

"Law bless you!" he says, "they ain't a-goin' to be put in the Halbert 'All."

"Well, then," I says, "wherever will they be put, unless it's out in the gardins, as will be sure to turn to rain, and then everythink be spilte;" as would be a sin and a shame, for certingly some things is lovely, as I could stand and look at for ever, and were partikler struck with a many of them manyfacters, as did ought to be incouraged.

I were quite took aback at some lovely dolls as I declares would quite cut out any baby-show in this world; not as I 'olds with no baby-shows myself, 'cos in my opinion no good mother as really

loved 'er hinfant would let it be 'awked about for a show, when a lot of dolls might be made a deal prettier, and in course more hinterestin' to them as comes to look on, for whoever did care for any one's baby but 'er own, escept, preaps, now and then the grandmother, tho' she's pretty sure to quarrel with the other grandmother over it, and will even 'ave words with 'er own dorter about managin' of it; and as to 'er son's wife, she don't ever consider as she's fit to be the mother of 'er son's children, let alone bring 'em up.

They tells me as there's a book come out for to teach you 'ow to see that Exhibition all at once, as is a blessin', for I'm sure I've been three times, and not see it yet; and as to my legs, they did ought to be cast iron to stand the walkin' about, tho' I will say as there's plenty of chairs, not as any one could go about in a Bath chair like the Christshul Pallis, nor yet that one in 1851, where poor old Mrs. Maltby did used to be wheeled about all day long, tho' certingly she did come it 'eavy on one old gent's toes, as were 'is tender pint thro' bein' a alderman and lusty, as give way to 'is feelins as were 'ighly unbecomin', partikler with a bishop as were a portly figger in a black silk apron a-comin' jest close behind 'im, as that alderman took and stepped back on; and I must say as in my opinion that bishop forgot 'isself too, as ain't clerical tho'

'ighly nat'ral when in sudden pain, as 'ave knowed Brown do the same, tho' not a man as is give to bad langwidge not in a general way.

I do not 'old with so much up and down stairs work, and if ever I 'as a Exhibition, let it be on the ground floor; but I do think as parties 'as gone mad over 'igh 'ouses now-a-days, as you did ought to 'ave a balloon to go up to bed in, as is all werry well for Paris where a 'ouse only means a floor, but 'ere in London it's orful work for servants, tho' in course they must 'ave water throwed up to the top story, and a lift for the coals; and I'm sure I wouldn't be 'ousekeeper not to King Solomon 'isself, if he give me a bed-room at the top of them 'igh 'ouses out South Kensin'ton way, as is arf way up St. Paul's to the garrets.

I werry near missed seein' a lot of lovely picters thro' a turnin' back jest where I did ought to 'ave gone for'ard, as is often the way in this world; the same as a party as Brown knowed as inwented a locomotive as he spent years and years over, and then give it up and died reg'lar disgusted, and 'is pardner as lived made a fine fortun' over it; as shows as we never should be impatient in this world, cos we never knows when luck's a-goin' to turn, or wot a day may bring forth, as the sayin' is.

I'm sure when they told me as my aunt 'ad left me them two 'ouses out by Battle Bridge, never did

I think as the Midland Railway were a comin' to swallow them up an' pay 'ansom' for so doin'; not as railways always acts that way, for there were poor old Mrs. Raymin as took and pitched out of the train on to a basket of lamps as were a-standin' on the platform as got nothink but abuse and fined forty shillin's for 'er pains thro' leavin' the train when in motion, with 'er elber put out and two ribs broke, thro' the porters all a-swearin' as she wouldn't keep 'er seat; and 'ow were she to know when it was drawed up to the platform, as in course is werry confusin'

I must say as she were always a werry pig-'eaded party, as nearly got me in a scrape once as I shan't never forget, tho' many years ago, all thro' a-swearin' as a party 'ad picked 'er pocket in the Islin'ton bus as set next 'er, and proved for to be the Lord Mare's Remembrancer a-goin' 'ome to 'is tea, and the puss in 'er secret pocket all the time, as were the fust time she'd wore the gownd, so in course forgot all about it bein' put there.

The third time as I went to that Exhibition I certingly did enjoy myself thro' bein' all alone and not 'urried nowheres, and wandered all over, a payin' of a sixpence hextra to walk in the gardins, as is a deal too formal and solem for me, and jest like a symmetry without the tombstones.

I see a lot of wonderful things as was a cat and

a rabbit a-playin' the fiddle and a bear a-dancin', and all machinery, as certingly is wonderful; and I do wish as they'd inwent some machine as would make you walk as well as dance, and I'm sure I'd buy it if it was only to see the Exhibition with.

I should 'ave see a deal more only thro' fallin' asleep, for I 'adn't got arf round them lovely picters when, bein' that tired, and seein' of a seat in a snug corner, I got to it, and a-puttin' up my legs on another chair, and fell off that sound as nothink didn't ever wake me till a perliceman give me a shake, and says, "Come, it's time to go 'ome."

I says, "I knows best about that."

He says, "It's six o'clock."

I says, "Wot of that, this time of year, when it's light till ten?"

He says, "Any 'ow you've got to go."

"Well," I says, "I come in at two, and you don't mean to say as it can be six. Why, I've see next to nothink, and no time to look at all them lovely picters."

He says, "You must come agen, when you can keep your eyes open."

I says, "Young man," I says, "my eyes is open enuf, as am always wide awake."

"Well," he says, "any 'ow you've been fast asleep 'ere over two 'ours, for I've been a-watchin' you."

"Well," I says, "that in course is your dooty."

"Yes," he says, "and now it's my dooty to see you out."

I says, "Werry well, I'm a-goin';" and up I gets and walks out along with a lot more, as some on 'em 'adn't been in more than a 'our; and one gentleman said as the reason they closed that early were so as the Royal Family might come and see it; and in course them Committee 'as got their friends as they likes to show over it on the quiet of a Sunday, as is only nat'ral, cos we all looks out for ourselves in this world, and it ain't likely as that there Committee's a goin' to take a lot of trouble without gettin' well paid for their time.

I'm told as some on 'em 'as got lovely 'ouses to live in, and lots of money as they made out of that old original Exhibition in 'Igh Park, and in course lives like fightin' cocks, and carries their 'eads as 'igh as bull-beef, as the sayin' is, and won't speak to no one under a lord, and in my opinion they'll burn their fingers over this ere place, as parties all feels disappinted in, and as to that there Halbert 'All, it's a deal too big for to 'ear well in, and I should say 'ighly dangerous in case of a panic, or anythink like that, as in course ain't built solid, like that there Colliseeum at Rome, as is like a native rock, as the sayin' is, and couldn't ketch fire not if they wanted to; and no risk thro' them old

Romans not a-usin' no gas, nor lights about the place.

Wot I thinks is as parties don't seem now-a-days to 'ave no moderation, and wants to do too much, the same as that there tower of Babylon, as were too much of a good thing, and I've 'eard say as even Spurgin's Tabernacle 'olds too many to be safe, with all them galleries, as 'ave 'ad one accident, and ain't like them big churches over abroad, as bein' all solid stone and on the ground floor, you don't run them risks; not as I should care to be in St. Peter's itself with a panic at my back; as were nearly squoze flat last year thro' parties all a-rushin' out for to get the Pope's blessin', as there weren't no occasion to 'urry arter, thro' 'im a bein' that considerate and didn't come out for a good bit, a-givin' us plenty of time.

I'm one as can't bear no crowds, as I 'ave 'eard say is jest like Queen Wictoria, and that's why as she don't incourage none of them sights like openin' of Parlyment, and likes to do heverything on the quiet, as is wot makes a many say as she wants to abdercate, as I don't believe, but it's a pity not to 'ave more show about 'er, cos it makes a many think as she ain't no more than that there President of Merryker as were only a tailor when I were over there, and looked like one, and preaps the next may be a barber, and in course if he was to

give 'isself hairs every one would larf at the hidear, not as I would care to be a queen myself, as must be pretty nigh worreted to death with all them ministers adwisin' of 'er constant.

For if there is a thing as aggrawates me in this world it's them parties as will be always a-givin' of you adwice, as if you didn't know your way about as well as them; and as to givin' adwice escept as a doctor, why it's waste of breath, for parties seldom takes it, and if they do, and anything 'appens to go wrong, then they turns on you like a worm, as the sayin' is, and says, "Ah! that were all thro' a-takin' your advice," and preaps you never give it as I'm ready to take my solemn davy I never did to Mrs. Glaisher, as took them anterdeluwian pills for 'er staggers as she were subject to like a 'oss, as turned 'er a deep blue all over, and staggered wuss than ever arter 'em.

No! no! I always says to parties in sickness, send for a doctor, esceptin' it's somethink quite simple as werry often a old nuss knows more about than a doctor, partikler children in their teeth, or anythink like that, but as to pamperin' with your 'ealth, with quack medsins and sich like, I don't 'old with it, and as to pisons, I won't never take nor give 'em myself without a doctor, as is contrary to nater, for it stands to reason as that as kills can't cure, leastways that's

my opinion; tho' in course a doctor knows best, as is used to killin', but let 'im give the dose and let them as likes take it.

There's lots of things in that Exhibition as I should like to 'ave bought for myself, partikler them Hirish poplins, as is lovely wearin', and will dye equal to new, leastways I 'ad one myself as did, as I got over in Dublin, but is to be 'ad jest the same in Regency Street the young man told me, as were that perlite in answerin' questions, as is pretty nigh as good as the Exhibition to walk up, when not 'urried and time, to 'ave a good look at the shops; for I see there them werry identical dolls as I'd see at the Exhibition; so I did a-goin' along Oxford Street see close agin the Pantheon some of that werry identical chaney as looks werry lovely; not as ever I should trust myself on one of them chaney gardin-seats, for we all knows as chaney is a brittle thing, and never meant to bear no weight; tho' I've 'eard say as over in Chaney where it comes from, thro' being inwented, as they builds them pergoders of it, as runs to a great 'ight, jest like the one in Kew Gardins, as were King George's delight, and built to please 'im, as wanted some objec' for to look at, tho' I don't see as he need, for in a general way he 'ad Queen Charlotte, and all the children with 'im.

I don't think as ever I did see more lovely

work in my life, partikler a table-cover done in crochy, as they said were worked by two sisters, done beautiful, as I do like for to see families that industrous as is sure to get on.

I never hadn't no consumption as them Turkey carpets was made in Bond Street and 'Oburn, leastways that's wot the young man told me; so I says, "Escuse me, sir, but 'avin' been among them Turkeys, I knows their ways, as lolls about on them carpets, and may preaps make more than they wants, so sends wot they've got over for to be sold; not but wot I 'opes as we shan't never give in to them nasty, lazy Turkey ways of lollin' about on the carpets, tho' certingly they are some on 'em that soft and lovely as many a one would jump at the chance of sleepin' on 'em.

I must say as they makes them chandyleers lovely, as looks like fairys tales all a-glitterin' in the 'Rabian Nights; but of all the curious things as ever I did see it was them Japan things, as must be singler sort of parties, leastways as far as figgers goes, and must say as I always did like Japan ware myself, and 'ave got a tea-tray as I've 'ad by me for years, as wants doin' up again, for they can make it jest like new in no time; and as to the screens, they are beautiful, and a werry nice thing too for to keep off the draft, and yet let you 'ave plenty of hair.

I've 'eard as them Japans is wonderful parties to inwent and work to, but don't 'old with no forriners, and is a spiteful lot, for poor Mrs. Tuplin's son were massacreed by them thro' goin' ashore without leave, leastways so it were supposed, as he never turned up agin, as were 'ard lines for 'er, poor soul, never to know whether he were alive or dead, but might 'ave been wuss if it 'ad been 'er 'usban', 'cos nothink ain't wuss than bein' kep' in constant suspense whether you're a widder or not, and preaps 'ave 'im turn up when least espected; partikler if you should 'ave 'appened to have settled agin like a friend of mine as I were a-tellin' you about, as 'ad 'er 'usban' drive up in a cab in the middle of the night, as in course were a dreadful shock to both.

I'm sure I wonders as parties ever 'as the courage for to send all them lovely things out of their shops to them Exhibitions, as it's a mussy as they wasn't sent to Paris, as that there Commune would 'ave nobbled the lot, and a nice deal of swag too, as the sayin' is; not as any one in their right senses would ever trust their property any more to the French, a set of willins; and if, arter wot 'ave 'appened them as 'ave got money and all manner likes to send it over to Paris, let 'em, and all the 'arm I wishes 'em is as they may get it back agin the same as I never shall my umbreller and whittle

as I left behind me, as was both equal to new; so, a-knowin' my own loss, I should adwise them parties as 'ave got lovely shops in London to stop in 'em, and never send their goods over to Paris no more, as is a nice place to live in for murders and riots, I must say, and don't seem to feel it a bit, for friends of mine as 'ave lived thro' it all says as they got to like it.

"Well," I says, "if I was French, I should feel as I ought to live on sackcloth and hashes all my life, for I should be downright ashamed to look any one in the face; but, bless you, I don't think as there's either shame nor feelin' in them French, and all I've got to say is, as any one as is fool enuf to be their king jest deserves all they'll get by it, as'll be more kicks than 'apence, as the sayin' is, I should say, and serve 'em right."

I only wish as that there little book as tells you 'ow to see the Exhibition in one wisit 'ad come out at fust, for I've been there three times, and ain't seen it yet, with my legs reg'larly a-tremblin' under me with the stairs, as is killin' work, tho' I must say as I rested werry pleasant, and got refreshments too outside in them balconies, and my tea twice over, as were werry rewivin', partikler that arternoon, as we were a-goin' to 'ear the rory-toryer in the Halbert 'All, with tens of thousands of performers on the orgin, as is all secret music,

and wot I always wanted to 'ear, thro' a remem-berin' 'earin' a aunt of my mother's as lived 'ouse-maid when a gal in Westminster Abbey to one of the Cannons as lived in a cloister, and 'ad a stall there, talk about the rorytoryer in the Habbey, as she well remembered, as were enuf to bring the marble monnyments to life with the noise, as ladies fainted dead away at, and even King William the Fourth turned that pale as they 'ad to undo 'is shirt collar afore he put on 'is crown, as they was obli-gated for to borrer a penknife of a party in the crowd as made 'is fortun' thro' bein' at 'and when the king's nose bust out a-bleedin' as reg'lar upset Queen Addlead a-jumpin' out of the way, but took and beknighted that doctor on the werry spot.

So I always 'ad a wish to 'ear it, partikler the 'ailstone chorus, as is where the Children of Israel was a-perishin' for thirst, as must be a dreadful death I always thinks, from bein' a thing as I suffers from myself, and I'm sure you wouldn't catch me at no deserts if I couldn't get some drink. I should be nowheres in no time, tho' in gen'ral I've 'eard say as you gets delicious fruits, not as ever I see any myself when over in Egyp, as was all sand, and with now and then a skelinton picked clean as dry as a bone, as the sayin' is.

But as I were a-sayin', that little book is won-derful for to 'elp you thro' that Exhibition, as is for

all the world like Rossymun's Bower to find your way in, as you were obligated for to 'ave a thread to guide you into; but as to the Exhibition, I've been all thro' them passages and corridors as they calls 'em, but there don't seem to be nothink else, and as I says you seems always to be a-comin' to the Exhibition and never to get there. But law! wot does it matter, for you sees a deal on the road and more than you can remember, as is always the reason as I don't care about seein' sich a lot of things at a time.

I must say till I read the Cattylog as I 'adn't no consumption as them Denmark and Sweden was able for to make so many things as is beautiful, a thinkin' as there wasn't nothink but turnips come from them Swedes; and as to Denmark I once remember a-'earin' about a play as I went to see bein' called 'Amlet Prince of Denmark, as arterwards lived and died arter a long sickness at Camberwell, as is called Denmark 'Ill to this day.

I 'ave 'eard say as tho' the Princess of Wales come from them parts, yet she ain't no more Denmark born than I am thro' bein' German like the rest of the Royal Family.

Yet I must say as they makes lovely chaney and jewels and paintin's in Denmark, and so they do in Sweden, as only shows as we didn't never ought to look down on nobody, cos even them 'eathen Blacks

makes some things lovely, partikler them ingin shawls, and beautiful gold works, as is a good thing as they've got anything as they can do, as is a nice idle lot; and we know who finds work for idle 'ands to do, as the sayin' is.

I didn't see nothink Merrykin in that Exhibition, as surprised me, for they certingly are wonderful for inwentions, tho' the Germans over there do say as they inwents nearly all on 'em; but certingly their apple-parers and washin' machines is werry useful, and so is some of their stoves, let alone the sewin' machine as there's disputes about who inwented it; and so I've 'eard say there always is over them inwentions, and some say as it were Sir Isic Newton as inwented the sun a-goin' round the world thro' seein' of a apple fall off a tree, as were a deal more likely to 'ave been the wind than the sun, I should say.

Then there was another party as inwented the circulation of the blood, and another waccination; but they only found out wot 'ad always been a-goin' on, for I won't never believe but the blood 'ave been in circulation from the beginnin' of the world, and so 'ave the sun and moon been a-follerin' one another all about from the werry beginnin', and in course it's werry interestin' for to see 'ow things 'as growed up to what they've come to; but in my opinion folks was quite as 'appy afore ever steam

was knowed, or gas neither for that matter; and as to clothes, parties makes a deal too much fuss about 'em nowadays in my opinion, as is the ruin of arf the servant gals in the university, as I ain't no patience with sich rubbish, a-dressin' theirselves out a-imitatin' their missuses, as is many of 'em dressed in wot they can't pay for, as is a bad example.

But as I were a-sayin', it was a reg'lar downright treat for to get a good cup of tea, and a rest at that there Exhibition, afore a-goin' to 'ear the rorytoryer in the Halbert 'All, only considerin' it were a showery evenin' they might as well 'ave let us thro' to the 'All as would 'ave saved our legs; but, law, you can't espect nothink in this world if you ain't carridge folks, not but wot they 'as their drawbacks, for there 'was the Linklaters as 'ad been in the ile-shop line, and made a fortun' thro' takin' Government contracts for railroad grease, or somethink like that, and set up their carridge, as opened with a glass front in case of rain, as run away tho' only one 'orse from Wimbledon down to Putney Bridge, and was werry nigh the death of the five inside, as couldn't jump out thro' bein' wedged in that tight, and all the 'arm done were breakin' two of old Linklater's ribs, as were on 'is wrong side in drivin', and run into a pleasure wan, and the two boys as were on the box with 'im jumped off without a scratch, and the only wonder

were 'ow any 'orse in this world could run away with sich a load behind 'im, and only stopped by the toll collector.

And I says, "That shows 'ow wrong it is for to do away with turnpikes," as 'ave been the savin' of many a life thro' a-closin' the gate agin a runaway 'orse, not as it stopped the 'orse as Mr. Silsby the pork-butcher were on a-goin' to the Easter 'Unt, and run away with, jest agin the Globe in the Bow Road, as the Plaistow toll-bar didn't really stop 'im, tho' it did the 'orse, as pulled up that suddin a-comin' to it, and shied poor Silsby slap over 'is ears, bar and all, as never were quite right in 'is 'ead arter it, tho' found in a settin' persition, as no doubt the concussion were too much, tho' he did outlive it over twenty-seven year, and as to its makin' 'im talk nonsense that's all rubbish, for I've 'eard them say as 'ad knowed 'im all 'is life as it come nat'ral to 'im from a boy.

I'm one as is fond of music myself, tho' never one to more than 'um a toon to 'ush the hinfant off, cos my dear mother never would let me go a-singin' about the 'ouse, as she considered a bad 'abit in young people, and I can't a-bear to 'ear the gal a-doin' over 'er work and always stops 'er; tho' ready for to give a 'apenny to a orgin, but never a fardin' to that boy German band, as ought to be indited for a noosance, but must say as I 'adn't no

consumption wot could be done with those drums and trumpets till I went to that rorytoryer.

We was in Halbert 'All in werry good time, and set in the middle of the floor, as was werry comfortable seats, and certingly it were a wonderful sight; lots of parties all a-comin' in all round up to the werry roof.

I says to Mrs. Welbank, "Why that orgin is enuf to blow the roof off with them tremenjous pipes I should say, as must in course be played by steam, as no 'uman arms couldn't."

"Well," she says, "I 'ave read as it's all 'lectricity, as you can play all the orgins in the world at one time."

"Dear me;" I says, "you don't say so; as must be werry orkard, for in course it would be the same toon, as would make a great confusion if they was to play it at once in all the different places of washup."

She says, "Oh! in course that's all settled aforehand."

While we was a-talkin' in come a lot of parties as set all in front of that orgin, and round about it, as was many on 'em ladies, as nearly all wore red cloaks, as made it look werry cheerful.

I asked young Tweedy who they was, as said the chorus.

I says, "They ain't all a-goin' to sing to-night, are they?"

"Oh!" he says, "certingly."

"Well, then," I says, "if they only sings a werse apiece we shan't never get 'ome till the mornin', as the sayin' is."

"Oh!" he says, "it won't be so late as that."

Well, jest then that orgin begun a-tunin' up, as sounded wonderful soft, and nothink like so loud as I espected, tho' I could see as it took three on 'em to play it, and then them fiddlers they was set a-goin' along with all them flutes and trumpets, and went on werry singler, not a-playin' no toon nor nothink', but only a larkin' like, jest to get their 'ands in, as the sayin' is.

Presently parties begun a-clappin' their 'ands, and a gentleman with long 'air and white kid gloves come in, and arter makin' of a bow to us as if to say, "Escuse me!" as showed 'is manners, set down with 'is back to us with a white stick in 'is 'and, as he were no doubt obligated to do for to 'ave 'is eye on all them fiddlers and keep 'em in order, as no doubt would have been up to their larks if he 'adn't.

So I asks young Tweedy who he was, as said he were the conductor.

"Well," I says, "I should 'ave took 'im for the driver by the way as he's a-goin' on;" for when

they begun a-playin' he 'ad to keep a-shakin' that stick at 'em for to keep 'em in order; and if any on 'em didn't play enuf, or played too loud, or anythink like that, I see as he soon were down on 'em, and put a stop to it with a look and a shake of 'is stick.

There was two ladies and two gentlemen as set in front close agin that conductor as didn't seem to want the stick, for they sung by theirselves, as was werry lovely, and I couldn't 'ave believed as any one could 'ave made theirselves 'eard sich a way off, not but what it's wonderful 'ow fur the 'uman woice will go, for I well remembers a gal as sold sprats down the Commercial Road as I could 'ear three streets off; and more than that, there's the catsmeat-man as our cat can 'ear ever so far off, and is out at the airey long afore ever he comes in sight; and as to the 'leven o'clock beer, I do believe as Mrs. Challin could 'ear the man afore he was 'ardly out of the public-'ouse.

But in course that don't prove nothink, as ain't to be thought on like music, but only callin' and bawlin', like "'Airskin, cook!" or "'Arthstones!" or a costermonger's barrer, and werry different to that lovely song as one of them gents begun to sing, as I could 'ave set and listened to for ever so long, as the party give out fust-rate, and 'adn't no sooner shet 'is mouth than up jumps all them red cloaks

and gents at the back, and bust out all a-singin' together at once, as was werry thoughtful on 'em, cos it give that party as 'ad been a-singin' all alone time for to rest and get 'is breath agen.

Well, that's 'ow they went on, fust one a-singin' a bit, and then all the others a comin' in, and there was a gentleman as sung lovely deep, and then two young ladies, one a-singin' agin the other, and then all the others would bust out suddin with the orgin and the fiddlers all a-playin' together, and wot with them and the drums it's a wonder as that conductor could keep 'is temper, and weren't stunned up there; but you could see as he'd got 'em under 'is thumb, as the sayin' is, and wouldn't let none on 'em take no liberties.

I 'ad a book, but couldn't read it thro' 'avin' forgot my spectacles; but young Tweedy were werry kind a-readin' to me, but as them words was werry solem, and he begun a-cuttin' jokes about 'em, I pulled 'im up werry short, and says, "If that's your ways of treatin' them subjecs it ain't mine;" so I says, "Please keep them remarks to yourself, as is werry unbecomin'," for I felt for all the world like bein' in church, and once or twice nearly quite as sleepy, and do think I should 'ave dropped off but for the music bein' that lovely as kep' a-wakin' me up, partikler the trumpet, tho' that young Tweedy did say arterwards as he couldn't 'ear 'arf the chorus

thro' my snores, as were only 'is impidence cos I'd checked him a-makin' fun out of wot he didn't ought to.

One part were partikler grand, where they all sung together, and everybody stood up all but Mrs. Welbank, as is that martyr to bunions as she said she couldn't do it not to save 'er life, as I 'eard parties a-sayin' behind was 'er hignorance, as were 'ard on 'er, poor thing, and shows as we didn't ought never to judge, 'cos no one knows where the shoe pinches but them as wears it, as the sayin' is.

Well, arter that were over, parties begun a-goin' out, as is werry bad manners a-interruptin' others from 'earin', tho' I must say as I didn't see the pull of 'em a-singin' Amen over and over agin to everlastin', as there don't seem no sense in; but we stopped to the werry last; and that gent in the gloves with white stick made 'is bow as I waves my 'ankercher to, and says, "Brayvo every one of you, as 'ave done it wonderful!"

Tho' I must say as I should like to 'ear it a little bit nearer, tho' young Tweedy did try and stand me out as it were 'eard better 'igher up thro' sound assendin'.

"Well," I says, "sound may, but I don't want to, and I'm sure sound wouldn't, if there was as many stairs for it to go up as there is for me;" for you've a deal of goin' up and down stairs for to get

to that arena, as they calls it, tho' there's plenty of ways out, and no much crowdin' till you've got outside, as is werry orkard thro' parties all a-meetin', as makes a great confusion, partikler arter a-settin' all the hevenin' with all that there 'armony round you, as the sayin' is.

I never shall make out 'ow them ladies and gentlemen can ever make theirselves 'eard at the Cristshul Pallis; but law, that's a trifle to this 'ere Halbert 'All, and in my opinion it'll end in not 'avin' no singers at all, but all done by machinery, as I'm told they can imitate the 'uman woice on the orgin; so they've only got to get a steam-ingin' strong enuf to work the bellus, and then in course they could make the machine sing loud enuf to be 'eard all over London at once, as would save a deal of trouble and espence to all parties, as might set at 'ome and listen.

Of all the places to worret you to get away from, it's that Halbert 'All, partikler arter a shower, as is all mud and mounted perlice, and not a cab to be 'ad, and parties a-comin' out at every door a-shovin' you off the pavement, as made me that wild, for I can't abear bein' shoved about; and then, when you do get a cab, others as calls theirselves gentlemen a-takin' of it from you; and then young Tweedy a-sayin' it were only a step to the railway, as I were that dead beat as I couldn't 'ardly drag one leg

arter the other; and whyever they don't bring the railway under that 'All, thro' a tunnel like the Cristshul Pallis I can't think, as could be easy done under ground.

But I am glad as I've 'eard that rorytoryer, as is wot I calls a reg'lar coo-dool in music, and is wot the Exhibition did ought to be in my opinion; not as I could get to sleep for ever so long, a-fancyin' as I'd got the big drum and trumpet in my 'ead, as changed to the orgin, as is wonderful soothin', and fell off at last a-thinkin' as I were a-listenin' to them sweet woices as sung that quiet as you might fancy was angels, as you'd like to 'ear when you was a-dyin', as would be that soothin' and make death a pleasure, as in course it did ought to be, and that's why I thinks them rorytoryers is good things, thro' a-makin' parties reflect on them subjecs as we did all ought to give our minds to now we're in 'ealth and sperrits, so that while we're a-goin' about seein' sights and exhibitions, and all manner as is good for this world, we did ought to give a thought to another and a better, as the sayin' is.

For tho' there's a deal as is bright and beautiful to look at 'ere, and plenty of pleasure, yet for any one as can look back there's a deal of sorrers and troubles to remember, and 'eavy black days to come to us all, as nothink in this world can't drive away

nor yet comfort us under; for as I always did used to say to my children, the same as my dear mother did used to say to me, don't think too much of pleasure and 'ollidays, but be merry and wise, as the sayin' is, and don't never forget as it ain't for long as we're 'ere, and try and do your dooty while you are.

It's a great thing no doubt for to 'ave all them fine inwentions and sich like, for to improve everybody's minds, as the sayin' is, but wot I wants to see is somethink more done in the way of teachin' parties 'ow to be good children, and then good fathers and mothers, and good neighbours too, and that would be worth all the fine harts as ever was painted, or the wonderful machinery as ever were made.

Not as I means to speak agin them things, but only wishes as parties wouldn't think it isn't them as can make this world 'appy, cos they can't; for one really good man, or woman either, will do more for their feller creeturs than steam and gas, and 'lectricity into the bargain put together can, and that's why I'm glad as they're a-goin' to edicate every one proper, and when they do that, why in course everybody will like for to see these great Exhibitions, and all manner like that, and know 'ow to be'ave theirselves both when out for a 'olliday, and likewise live decent and proper at 'ome;

as'll do a deal more to improve us than bein' talked to and lectured over things as most on us as 'ave got to work with their 'ands ain't got the intellex to understand, nor none of us the time to study, and it's werry certing as long as this world lasts we can't all on us be fust, some few must give the orders, and a good many must obey 'em; and all as I says is, if them as 'ave got the money would be a little more liberal to them as 'ave 'elped 'em make it, then every one would be more satisfied, not in course as we're any of us quite contented, and we shouldn't 'ear of them strikes, and trades' unions, and sich like.

And I've got to say as I wish as all them noble lords and gentlemen wouldn't be always a-botherin' their 'eads about the poor man's morals, but jest look at 'ome, 'cos if there's goin' to be laws for to stop a poor man from doin' wrong, there ought to be laws to keep the rich man in order; and if it's wrong for a workin' man to be a bad 'usban', get drunk, or go a-bettin' on 'orse-races, and spend 'is time at a public-'ouse, or 'ave a club, why, in course it's a deal worse for a lord.

No; if we're a-goin to make laws for good behaviour, as if we was a parcel of children, why then let 'em be laws as will be down upon all alike, from Queen Wictoria to the lowest pauper; 'cos, if you comes to that, there's many a good gal and

boy too as owes their ruin to the bad examples as is set 'em by their betters; and if it wasn't as swells was idle and wicious, many poor people would be 'onest and 'ard-workin', and live and die respectable, and never 'ave been tempted to go to the bad, jest for to please them as calls theirselves their betters.

I've lived in the world a good bit now, and don't believe as Acts of Parlyment ever did, or ever will, make men good—not in a free country, as in course a good many carries their freedoms a deal too far, as is a thing I never would allow myself, 'cos I always says, if we wants to be respected, we did ought to respect ourselves fust; and the only way to do that is to be'ave ourselves proper, as is wot all them Exhibitions and things did ought to teach us; and all I've got to say is, that them as won't do it by fair means did ought to be made by foul, as the sayin' is.

Mrs. Brown at the South Kensington Museum.

MRS. BROWN AT THE SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

I SAYS to Brown, "I don't mind a-goin' on the quiet for to see them paintin's at that there Royal 'Cademy, as they calls it, but it don't suit me for to be a-draggin' about the streets all day constant on the rampage, with them sight-seers from the country, as in course, poor things, don't know nothink, but needn't be insultin' to their betters as does; for I think that Mrs. Welbank a-darin' to say, as she did in my own 'earin', as I were one of them as 'ears with my ears and understands with my elbers, as the sayin' is, were downright insults."

"So," I says, "I thank you, I'll go and see wots to be seen all alone, as can make it out a deal better than goin' along with Mrs. Podder and 'er lot, as I shouldn't 'ave gone near agin, but for 'er a-writin' to say as she escepted my polergy, and

'oped as I should come and drink tea arter meetin' at that Royal 'Cademy in Pickerdilly, as did used to be a dead wall for to pertect the 'ouse as was all out in the country when fust built, and snipes was shot in Berkeley Square."

So thro' not a-wishin' for to seem to 'arbour no ill feelin's I went, but of all the scrougin' as ever I see it's that 'Cademy, and as to the paintin's, you can't see much en 'em, and no great loss, leastways that's wot I 'eard some of them as considers their-selves reg'lar commonsewers a-sayin' as I were a-settin' restin', with nearly every one a-backin' on to me and fallin' over my feet constant, and the 'eat and dust stiflin' me, as am sorry I'd dressed myself that light, as were a pale grey alpaca trimmed with light green, as is a dressy mixture, with pink in your bonnet; but law, I might as well 'ave been in sackcloth and hashes, as the sayin' is, for all the notice as was took of me or my dress either, for that matter.

Mrs. Podder, I considers, looked werry wulgar in black sating and a yaller shawl, and three large red roses in 'er 'at, with a reg'lar stack of false 'air on 'er 'ead, and 'er eyebrows painted like a arch over each eye, as give 'er a bold, leery look, as don't become any one as is nearer fifty than forty by a long chalk, as the sayin' is.

In course no one goes to that 'Cademy to see

picters, but only to see and be seen. Cos I've 'eard say as they don't pretend for to 'ang picters cos they're good, but mostly portraits, jest wot's been painted by their own lot, and a nice lot they are, and parties as they paints won't give 'em another job if they don't see theirselves a-'angin' up there.

I jest looked round a bit, and then took and set down near the door, and waited for Mrs. Podder and 'er two nieces, as said they only cared for the portraits, cos they liked to know them swells by sight.

I'm sure any one could tell as them picters was painted by beginners, as looks as different to the forrin ones in the 'All of Harts, tho' I must say as some one or two forrin ones 'ad got in there by mistakes, and two on 'em werry undecent, partiklar a poor black nigger gal as a waggerbone Turk as sold parrets 'ad stripped and turned out-of-doors, and then there was another forrin female, as were a barefaced creatur, to say the least, as 'ad come into the place quite denuded where a gent were a-settin' ritin' at a desk, rolled up in a carpet.

I can't say as I thought much of the portraits, as was a good many on 'orseback, and done by the 'ead boy of the 'Cademy, as you might easy guess, or they wouldn't 'ave 'ung sich signboards up anywheres but outside a public; and as to the ladies

there was a great mixter, and one of Norah Bell, as goes by another name; they do say as she did used to be a great beauty, but not even paint can't make her that now.

Then all the rest was 'istory, as you can't believe a word about, leastways, I never will believe as that paintin' is true about Qneen Ann Bullen bein' brought 'ome in sich a beastly state of intostication, and no wonder Old 'Arry ill-used 'er, as they couldn't get 'er up the steps to 'er coronation, not but that's wot they're always a-sayin' about queens, for them same reports was always about Queen Caroline, as I were quite a child when she died, and couldn't be got thro' Temple Bar on 'er way to Germany to be berried.

Most of them picters I couldn't make nothink on, escept Mary Queen of Scotts, and Lady Jane Grey, as is old friends thro' bein' both beheaded the same day, and neither on 'em werry fond of their 'usban's; but I do not 'old with that Jane Grey, as stood a-gloatin' over 'er 'usban's bein' beheaded thro' a winder, as is bad taste in a widder to show 'erself at the winder under them circumstances any 'ow.

There was a deal of marble 'eads all about, and one with a crown on, as they calls Queen Wictoria, as must 'ave growed a tremenjous size if she's like that, as them two nieces of Mrs. Podder come up

and fetched me to look at, a-sayin' it were the werry himage of me, as tho' always considered to 'ave a fine bust ain't sich a size as that, nor shouldn't be, not even cut out in stone.

A werry little of that 'Cademy goes a long way with me, and glad I were when the others was ready, and we went off not a-carin' for the picters, and didn't think much of the wisitors, as was a dowdy lot, and a live Quakeress among 'em, and parsons by the score, as you always do see at anythink like that, the same as the sea-side, as swarms with 'em idlin' about.

The reason as Mrs. Podder went off in sich a 'urry were that she'd promised Mrs. Padwick to be in to a early cup of tea, as they was all a-goin' to the South Kensin'ton Museum in the hevenin', but I thinks to myself, not for Joe, as 'ad 'ad enuf of them parties for one day, so, tho' glad to get to Mrs. Padwick's by the Cherrin' Cross 'bus, said as I'd stop at 'ome and rest, as almost brought on words with me and Mrs. Padwick; and them two nieces of Mrs. Podder tried their huttermost to persuade me, a-sayin' as the party wouldn't be nothink without me, thro' a-knowin' so much about heverything, as I knowed were all carney, for they was a-doin' nothink but jeer and larf at me behind my back, as is deceitful ways as I don't 'old with, partikler when encouraged by their helders, as is

Mrs. Podder, and ought to be ashamed of 'erself, a double-faced old toad.

For all as they could do to persuade me, I would not go on to that there South Kensin'ton with the rest arter tea, for, let alone not likin' 'em, I were that dead beat as I couldn't 'ardly put one leg afore the other, and felt thankful as I weren't a-goin' 'ome that night, for the only place as I were fit for were my bed, as is always a comfortable one at Mrs. Padwick's; and that tired was I as to walk myself off full early, with only a crust of bread and cheese and a glass of mild ale, afore the rest come 'ome to lobsters and pickled salmon, as I don't care for myself 'ome-made, but thinks a bit of Newcastle worth fifty on it.

I knowed as Mrs. Welbank and Mrs. Podder was a-goin' 'ome in the mornin', so took care not to get down till their cab were at the door, for I considers them two double-face cats, as Mrs. Padwick took in for the last week, thro' the lodgin's as they'd took bein' let over their 'eads, as they said; but the party as let 'em told me with 'er own lips, the day as they left, as they knowed they could only 'ave 'em for a week when they come in, and 'eard 'em say as Old Paddy must make room for 'em.

So when they was clean gone, I told Mrs. Padwick as I meant for to go and see that there

South Kensin'ton, as said, "Well done, contrairy, why not 'ave gone along with the rest last night?"

I says, "My dear creetur, arter the jeers as that puss-proud old wixen as I considers Mrs. Podder, tho' only a butcher's widder, treated me with, along with them two 'orse-faced nieces of 'ern at that 'Cademy, I wouldn't 'ave been seen a-goin' to a fight in the same cart with 'em, as the sayin' is."

For I 'eard 'em a-talkin' about me quite loud, and a-sayin' as I should make a sweet full length, illudin' to a axcidence as I met with in the 'bus a-goin', as were their fault as got in afore me, and set down near the door, so obligated me to go up to the werry top, and jest as I got up to it, come with my 'ead full butt agin that bit at the hend as 'angs down like with such a frightful concussion as sent me backards, and down I set a-sprawlin' all along the bus, and then a set of grinnin' fools all began a-larfin' and couldn't 'elp me up for ever so long.

I do think if you wants to find out 'ow dis-obligin' parties can be, you've only to get into busses; for wot with them as won't move to make room for you to set down, and some as won't set fair, a-turnin' their back to you, and pretty nigh every one a-scowlin' at you when you gets in, as if

you 'adn't no right there; and the way as they'll wipe their muddy boots and draggletails agin you, to say nothink of drippin' umbrellers and them waterproof cloaks as 'olds pints of water, and didn't ought to be wore inside. I'd as soon walk thro' a pond pretty nigh as go in a bus on a wet day.

I didn't press Mrs. Padwick to go to that there South Kensin'ton with me, 'cos she's that subject to them sick 'eadaches, as makes 'er a toil of a pleasure, as the sayin' is; so, soon arter a cup of tea I started, and got the bus down to St. George's 'Ospital. I can't think 'ow it is as the Duke of Wellin'ton don't make 'em keep the road in front of 'is 'ouse more sweet and clean, for it's a downright noosance thro' bein that offensive, and all thro' their not a-keepin' of it swep' up constant as is enuf to stifle you with so many 'orses about, and must be bad for them poor creeturs in that 'ospital, as I thinks it's a pity they don't move somewheres down among the poor parts, as looks werry shabby, and wants doin' up dreadful.

They do say as it's werry poor, but I 'ave 'eard say as that 'ospital as they're been a-buildin' jest over Westminster Bridge, as Queen Wictoria 'ave jest opened, is quite rich enuf to support all the 'ospitals in London, only they've been and squandered the money over that buildin'; but, law bless me, we must all live, and wotever would become of

the builders and sich like if money wasn't wasted like that.

It's jest the same with buildin' a church as they gets up for the poor; why, it's a nice little job for all as 'ave got a finger in it, from the bishop downwards, as is wot Brown always says, and I always answers 'im, "Do live and let live," as the sayin' is; for I've 'eard say about one of them bishops as 'ave got 'eaps of dorters, and werry plain, as he nat'rally must try and get them young ministers to marry, as in course wouldn't do it without the bishop 'ad somethink to give 'em besides 'is dorter.

I got another bus from 'Igh Park Corner to that there Museum, as the conductor were a werry civil man; not one of them flibberty-gibbet chaps as jumps up and down like a wild bamboo, and tosses you about like a bundle of rags; but a serous disposed father of a family, as told me he'd been on that road man and boy six-and-forty year, long afore ever a bus were 'eard on, as the fust was Shillibeer on the Paddin'ton Road.

He was a nice man, and sorry I am he couldn't stop to 'ave 'is glass of ale at the "Bell and 'Orns," so give 'im the tuppence to get it at the "Keppel," where he changed.

He was a-tellin' me 'ow that Museum come to be built, as was called at fust the Bilers, and would

'ave run right along up to the corner of the churchyard, only them Catholics took and collared a bit of the ground, and was too sharp for Prince Halbert, as put 'im out dreadful, but for all that he couldn't put them out, so there they sticks to this day, and a werry nice place they've got I've 'eard say, tho' I never see, as in course no fieldmales isn't admitted.

I could 'ave set at the hend of that bus all day and listened to that there conductor, as would 'ave told me a deal more than wot he did, only but for stoppin' for to let passengers out and in, and I were downright sorry when he told me I'd come to my journey's end, as didn't seem 'ardly no distance.

I know'd all that part werry well myself once, as were a country lane with gentleman's 'ouses all along, as part of one is still a-standin' close agin the entrance of the Exhibition, as is only trumpery jest for the present.

I'm sure if I'd been Queen Wictoria 'erself come down from the 'Ighlands, the perliceman couldn't 'ave been more perlite, as said there weren't nothink to pay, and I needn't go thro' the turnstile at the hentrance, as I could 'ave done easy only don't choose to be 'urried, as the feller tried to do at that Halbert 'All, a-rappin' with 'is 'and, and a-sayin' Move on this way, so I give 'im one of my looks, and went thro' that turnstile as slow as ever

I pleased for all 'is 'urryin', and if he'd said much more should 'ave stopped there ever so much longer, cos there wasn't one on 'em there as could 'ave got me out of it till I chose for to come, with all their bouncin', as is ways I don't 'old with, partikler not when you're a-payin' your money, and so I told 'im not to 'urry no man's cattle as might keep a donkey of 'is own some day.

But, law, they was werry different at South Kensin'ton, not as I can make out why they calls it a Museum, as I always thought were a place for 'Gypshum mummies and stuffed things, and not the precious articles as there is in them rooms.

I'm glad as I were alone, and no one to 'urry me thro' all them lovely things as is gold and silver, and jewels all over the place, and I never see more lovelier dimons, as big as pigeons' eggs, and old ancient 'arps the same as I've see a picter of King David a-playin' of the Psalms upon, and little 'arpsicords as must 'ave been as old as the 'ills, as the sayin' is.

I'm sure any one might pass their life in that place and not see all as there was to be seen downstairs alone, wot with one thing and the other, as must 'ave been brought from all over the world, and a good many on 'em lent by lords and ladies, as is werry kind, but would make me werry fidgety if I was a duchess for to know as my jewels was

there, tho' in course there is always some one on the look-out for fear as them light-fingered parties should be a-tryin' on any of their games.

I'd been a-lookin' round me ever so long, and a-thinkin' it were a-gettin' late, and asks a perlice-man the way out.

He says, "'Ave you been upstairs?"

I says, "No."

"Then," says he, "go."

"Well," I says, "I certingly will, for it's jest like fairyland with all them lovely gas-lights up in the roof; but," I says, "I ain't 'arf seen wot's down 'ere."

"Ah!" he says, "don't miss the picters wot-ever you do, as is fust-rate."

I see as that perlice quite took a pride in the place, as were nat'ral as he should, thro' a-livin' constant among all them hart treasures as they calls 'em, and I believe as they won't employ no one about the place but them as is reg'lar top-sawyers, and does the work more for love than money, as is wot they means by real hart, and a great many 'ave give their time and money too, like Prince Halbert, jest for to let poor people see wot lovely things parties as 'ave got fine 'ouses 'as always round 'em, not as I should care for it myself, as would keep me in a constant twitter for fear as they hould get broke, and I'm sure with the gals as

I've 'ad the British Museum would 'ave been smashed to bits long ago, for I'm sure the way as my best tea-things 'as been broke is enuf to make the werry 'art bleed, as the sayin' is.

In course picters is werry lovely things, but when you comes to 'ave sich lots on 'em it's werry confusin', partikler by gas-light, tho' in course it shows 'em better thro' a-concealin' of a many defects, the same as in other things, and there ain't no 'istory picters much escept shoein' a 'orse, and the maid and magpie, as I wanted to see partikler thro' 'avin' 'eard about 'er, poor thing, as was 'anged wrongful for stealin' a spoon, as she never did, and all thro' that mischeevous bird a-'idin' of it, tho' I've 'eard say as in the play they makes 'er get off, but in this picter she ain't a-doin' nothink but milkin' a cow, as never were a-'angin' matter, tho' I 'ave know'd parties sent to prison for a-doin' of it serreptitious afore daylight, as in course were a-defraudin' the cowkeeper.

There was some werry lovely dogs, partikler a white one, a-standin' bullyin' a poor old thing as 'ad crep' into a tub to die quiet, and then there were a blood'ound asleep, as were the best place for 'im, a savage brute, as will 'unt any one to death, not as you can blame 'im thro' bein' in course 'is natur to, and them as sets 'im on is more to blame, tho' I 'ave 'eard say over in Merryker as it was all lies

about pursuin' the slaves with them, as that there Mrs. Beechy Stow wrote about with 'er "Uncle Tom," as were werry affectin' no doubt, tho' all inwentions.

But of all the picters as ever I did see, it's one all about drink, as 'ave been painted by a party in the name of Crookshanks, as I don't suppose is 'is real name, thro' not a-wishin' for it to be know'd who painted that picter, as would 'ave all the publicins and brewers, and all the distilleries in London down on 'im like a thousan' of bricks, as the sayin' is, and wouldn't serve 'im with 'arf-a-quartern of nothink not if he were dyin' for it.

Not in course as he means that picter agin things took in moderation, as he 'ave painted some parties a-settin' enjoyin' theirselves like rational bein's over a weddin' or a christenin', as is all right and proper, the same as the minister a-takin' a glass of wine in the westry arter the sermon, partikler a charity one, or any one in 'eavy affliction takin' a little somethink for to cheer 'em up, or in course in sickness or nursin', as is 'ighly necessary, and shows 'im to be a family man as knows wot a father and a 'usban's duty is under them circumstances.

The same as 'avin' a few friends, as in course you'd give the werry best as you 'ad in your cellar or the nearest public; not as parties ever gives the

best at a ball, for I've 'eard them say as is rollin' in riches, as they considered as anything did for a dance, so as it went off with a pop well iced.

There wasn't no getting away from that picter! with a funeral done to the werry life, jest like the christenin', as shows as drink is necessary from the one hend to the other; and without it wotever would become of trade, as there's a many among the first in the land as gets their money thro' drink.

There's breweries and distilleries a-smokin' away in that picter, and them as owns 'em, as a many on 'em is in Parlyment, a-settin' enjoyin' the good things along with the bishops, and I've 'eard say as one Bishop of London 'ad a many shares in a large gin distillery thro' 'is wife, somewheres over the water.

Then in course if parties didn't make the money like that, they couldn't pay the taxes as keeps up the Church and the Harmy and Navy, as is always all drunk together at them public dinners, as must be kep' up the same as the prison and the workus and floggin' in the Navy, as is a warnin' to them as takes too much, the same in the Harmy and them as drinks till they're drove to murder and suicide, as ends in the gallus.

Oh, it's a lovely picter, and that nat'ral, a-showin' 'ow drink comes to hevery one, jest for

all the world like your native hair from the month, as the sayin' is.

Talk about Shakespear, as I never thought much on myself, and all the world bein' a stage, why, he ain't a patch on Crookshank, with 'is "All the world's a wat," as is wot it really is, and that's why they calls that picter the "Washup of Backus," as is the party as inwented drink, as we all knows is the liquor of life, as the sayin' is.

Not as I'm one for to encourage drinkin' to excess, like it is in that picter, tho' I'm sure as in moderation it's a good thing, jest for all the world like goin' into the sea for to bathe does you good, but carried out too far will drownd you; and as to stoppin' parties from takin' their drains for fear they should take too much, you might as well take away all edge tools, for fear as parties should cut theirselves.

As to hacts of Parlyment to shet up public-'ouses, why that there Mr. Bruce may as well shet 'imself up, as it ain't likely as them members is a-goin' to wote for that as'll ruin their own property, thro' bein' all in the liquor line theirselves, one way or the other; and in course all 'ave got their clubs as they can go to and get all they wants, when not a-wishin' to draw a bottle at 'ome, and is too much of the gentleman to interfere with a workin' man's pint of beer, as would be a mean act; and aggra-

wates the poor man agin 'is betters, as did all ought to 'ave the same rights as to when and where they shall eat and drink as long as they pays for it.

Not as I ever am one to speak light of drink, as is a bad 'abit, thro' 'avin' seen too much of its 'orrers, and shan't never to my dyin' day forget a poor thing as I knowed as took to it in the name of Selbin, as neat a gal as ever I see, and never fooled away 'er wages in too much dress nor nothink, and I do think took to it at fust thro' trouble, as married a fireman at the lead-works, as is a thirsty business, and 'im at fust encouraging 'er in it, thro' 'avin' good wages, and never a-thinkin' of a rainy day, as will overtake the best on us sometimes, so did ought to be looked out for, partikler with a young family a-comin' on, as 'ers did werry fast, poor thing.

Well, when she'd got three, as is a armful for any one, and not more than fourteen months atween them, he got out of work, thro' a-jinin' trades unions, and strikes, and all manner, as is the ruin of a workin'-man, not as I 'eard much about' it, for she never come near me, till one evenin' a-passin' close by Spitalfields Church, jest at the corner of a street, where there's one of them plate-glass gin-shops all flarin' and glarin', a woman run agin me full butt, as the sayin' is, as begged

my pardin, and then says, "Law, if it ain't Mrs. Brown."

Not if I'd stood there a-guessin' from that time to now should I ever 'ave said who it were, as I didn't know from Adam, as the sayin' is, and couldn't believe it were 'er, not even when she said as she were Ann Selbin, as 'ad married in the name of Armstis, and 'ad 'ad too much I could see with 'arf a eye.

"Why," I says, "Ann, wotever are you a-doin' 'ere with that hinfant?" as weren't more than six weeks old at the outside.

She said as she'd come out to get a bit of somethink for 'er 'usban's supper, as 'ad give 'er the money, and then she busted into tears, a-sayin' as he'd 'arf murder 'er; but she says, "I couldn't 'elp it if I was to be 'anged for it."

I says, "'Anged for wot?"

"Oh," she says, "the drink as I've been and spent the money in, and only got fourpence 'apenny out of a two-shillin' bit as he trusted me with, thro' me a-promising solem' as I wouldn't be gone ten minnits, as is more than a 'our ago, nor yet look at a public-'ouse, as I didn't mean to till I met them two, as is Mrs. Pinter and Ann Swift, as Armstis won't let me speak to if he knows it, as would stand a quartern; and that's 'ow it begun, and there's goes nine. Wotever will he say?"

I says, "Where do you live?"

She says, "Down there," a-pintin' into a narrer street, "number seventeen, second-floor back; but I must go."

I says, "Stop a bit, you must take 'im in 'is supper."

She says, "Wotever can I out of fourpence 'apenny?"

I says, "Come across with me to that cook-shop."

She were quite sober enuf for that, tho' lookin' wild in the eye. So we went in, and I got the young man for to cut a pound of nice cold biled beef, and put it up in a bit of paper; and she'd got a bason, as she said were for a bit of pickle.

I says, "Are you a-goin' to take 'im in any beer?"

She says, "Bless you, no, he's turned teatotaller, and won't touch nothink but tea and water."

So I walks to the ile-shop door with 'er, where she were a-goin' to buy the pickles, and if she didn't take and ask for some winegar, as she drunk off at a draught, and then bought twopen'orth of pickle cabbidge.

I says to 'er, "Do you want to kill your innercent babe, a-drinkin' winegar like that?"

She says, I dursn't go 'ome if I 'adn't took it, as 'ave set me all right."

I didn't say nothink thro' a-seein' it were a desp'rate case, but took and watched 'er into the street arter I'd wished 'er a good night, as I couldn't 'elp pityin' 'er, and said at partin' as she were to come and see me, as would do anythink in my power; but I says, "Wotever you do, pray keep away from the drink."

Weeks passed on as weeks will do, and I never 'eard nothink more of poor Ann, as I couldn't get out of my 'ead, and at last made up my mind as I'd go and see arter 'er to that haddress as she give me; and a nice job I 'ad to find 'er out thro' 'avin' give me the wrong number, as it's wot I might 'ave guessed if I 'adn't been a flat."

At last I did find the 'ouse where she 'ad lodged, as the woman told me they'd moved, leastways gone away, over three weeks; and as the baby 'ad died, and the two others been sent to 'is mother to keep 'em out of 'er way, as 'ad drunk the werry boots off their feet, and made away with heverything.

I says, "Is she drove to it thro' 'im?"

Says that good 'ooman as 'ad asked me to step into her back parlour and set down as were print for neatness, "Law bless you, no! a better 'usban' never lived, leastways since he took the pledge a-gettin' on to the rail, as he've been at work on over nine months now; but as to 'er, it's

downrignt orful, till the man were drove to leave 'er with seven shillins a week, tho' dotin' fond on 'er and the children too."

I says, "You can't give me no clue to where she's gone to?"

"Well," she says, "I did 'ear as she'd took a room at Mrs. Pinter's, as is 'ardly ever out of a public-'ouse 'erself, but not one to be overcome by it, as did live in Carter's Rents, somewheres near the 'Risin' Sun,' Bethnal Green, but not a woman as ever I knowed, not even to speak to, as 'ave been more in prison than out of it these last three years."

"Well," I says, "I can't rest till I've 'eard more on 'er, so will find 'er out; and thankin' you kindly for the rest as I've 'ad, I wishes you a good day."

It were jest on four o'clock, so I thought as I'd get a bus as would take me close agin the "Blind Beggar," and then I might soon get to the "Risin' Sun," and find out Carter's Rents; and so I did, and 'eard as Mrs. Pinter 'ad the kitchens, but were out all day.

So I asks a gal as were settin' on a doorstep a-nussin' a child if she'd ever 'eard as Mrs. Pinter 'ad lodgers.

She says, "She's only got the back kitchin as the woman were taken out on to the work'us ravin'

mad on a stretcher the night afore last, as 'ad tore all 'er clothes off, and tried to 'ang 'erself to the bed-post, as give way with 'er."

It give me a orful turn, for I felt sure it were that poor denuded creetur as she were a-talkin' about, so I says, "Wot work'us 'ave they took 'er to?"

She says, "The one down there," a-pintin' down the road, as I knowed by sight.

It always do give me a turn to go into a work'us, as is a cold-'arted place, tho' in the general way werry civil at the door, leastways to them as ain't paupers, and don't want nothink, as is often kep' waitin' for 'ours, poor things; and I've 'eard say as at one work'us they did used to tie up the bell, so as the master mightn't be worreted with the ringin', and then let the paupers pull at it till they was tired with waitin', and went away a-despairin', as is 'ard lines even for a bad 'un.

Not as I believe much in sich bein' deservin' poor, except deservin' of wot they gets at the work'us, as I 'ave 'eard say as them casuals at one work'us did used to 'ave to walk barefoot with the snow on the ground, across a open yard to where they was to sleep without a rag to cover 'em but a bit of a coverlet round their shoulders, while their clothes was bein' purified, as no doubt they required it; but I must say as the party as told me that tale, as

he'd see from 'is own back winders, were the biggest liar as ever I met with, and that's sayin' a good deal. So preaps it ain't true, arter all.

No doubt there's a deal bein' done to improve the poor; but, law bless you, the remedy ain't nothink to the disease, as the sayin' is, and till they gets better work'uses, where they separates the good from the bad, and the young in wice from the open, 'ardened sinner, it's nothink better than nurseries of wice as work'uses is.

Not as it's the faults of masters, nor matrons neither, as 'ave knowed both myself that respectable as every one looked up to 'em; but wot can they do with casuals, and the awful low characters as they've got to look arter, as I'm sure Mrs. Malhish, as I'd knowed for years, as were matron over the Incorrigibles, and wore a black widder's silk, with a clear musling apron, and 'er cap trimmed with white love—she were a lady down to the ground, and once made tea for the princesses, as 'ad their axletree broke a-comin' from Weymouth in poshay and four arter the king and queen, thro' 'er 'usban' bein' postmaster on the road over thirty years.

It 'ave always been my 'ope as I shouldn't come to the workus, for tho' we did ought to be contented in course wherever we are, yet it's werry like prison, and every one likes their bit of 'ome

if it's only a garret, and it's a wonder to me 'ow some keeps that over their 'eads, and yet scores does it with not five shillin's a week to do it on, and I've knowed old women myself as must live on air, thro' only 'avin' three from the parish, and pay 'arf-a-crown rent out of it, and may pick up a trifle from them as 'ave knowed 'em in better days.

It were some time afore I could get that party at the door to know wot I wanted, and 'adn't never 'eard the name of Armstis, and all manner like that, so at last, I says, let me see the master, for it were gettin' late, and me a-feelin' the want of my tea, as am one of them as must 'ave my meals reg'lar, or I'm nowheres, tho' not one to pine arter good things, as indeed, in a gin'ral way, prefers wot's plain.

Well, arter a bit, that master he come out a-espectin' for to see a casual as is wot he's most used to, tho' a-knowin' when he do see a lady 'ow to be'ave as sich, and when I tells 'im wot I'd come about, knowed all about it, and says, "Ah! I see, a disgrace to 'er family, as wants to keep it quiet; but I don't think she'll trouble you long."

I says, "Do 'er 'usban' know about it?"

He says, "Usban'; have she got one?"

"Yes," I says, "that I knows, for I see 'er married to 'im as were out of the gallery of Ball's

Pond Church, with my wail down, last Whitsuntide four year it must be, if not five, thro' always a-feelin' a interest in 'er like."

"Oh! then," he says, "you ain't no relation?"

I says, "I'm thankful to say not even by marridge, tho' I wouldn't deny it now she's that down in the world, poor thing, tho' 'er own fault."

So arter a minute or two, he says, "Do you think 'er 'usban's to be found?"

"Well," I says, "not a-knowin' cannot say; but," I says, "if you was to send to where they did used to lodge I think as there might be a clue, as the sayin' is, thro' the Temperance 'All as is jest oppersite."

He says, "I'll send arter 'im; but," he says, "you looks 'ot and tired, and I'm sure my good lady will be glad to give you a cup of tea, as it's werry good of you to take so much trouble over this poor thing, as is a reg'lar outcast;" and openin' of a door, he says, "step into my settin'-room, and I'll see about sendin' for 'er 'usban'."

I goes across the 'all, and up two steps into a room, with a 'arf glass door, and there who be a-makin' tea but Maria Corbett, as was gals together.

You might 'ave knocked me down with a feather thro' a-thinkin' she were at Clifton 'Ot

wells as 'ad took the post of matron there five years afore.

She give a start as werry nigh made 'er drop the tea-caddy as she 'ad in 'er 'and, as she says, "Oh, then you've found me out."

I says, "I 'ave, indeed; but wotever are you a-doin' 'ere?"

She says, a-comin' up to me, "Why a-makin' tea for my own 'usban', as was married to Martin last Saturday week, and only come 'ome 'ere the day afore yesterday, as we got the place thro' advertisement and bein' without encumbrance, and belongin' to the Established Church."

I says, "Well, you 'ave took my breath away."

She says, "Take off your bonnet for I am glad to see you, and so will Martin be, as is a widderer but no family, so suited me, and 'ave know'd 'im over two years as forty-eight, and a suitable hage for me, as am about the same."

"Ah!" I says, "Maria when you dies of old age I shall quake for fear, as the sayin' is," and jest then in come 'er 'usban', as I should say won't see fifty-five no more in this world thro' bein' gone werry grey over 'is temples, as generally tells hage.

He was werry friendly, and said as it were a bad case I'd come arter, as the doctor didn't give no 'opes on.

"Well, then," I says, "do send and see if 'er 'usban' can be found, and give 'im the address of the 'ouse where she 'ad lodged for to send to," and as Martin said I couldn't see that poor thing till the doctor 'ad come, I set and 'ad my tea, and thankful for to get it.

It were gettin' on for autum, as is a time I 'ates myself, and the days a-drorin' in, so by the time as we'd 'ad tea it were nearly dark, and the doctor 'ad come.

I'm sure I don't wonder at a master of a workus a-gettin' out of temper if they're all called away from their meals like that one, tho' no doubt bein' strange to the place made all the difference, cos as we all knows a new broom sweeps clean, as the sayin' is, and I'm sure Martin kep' a-sweepin' in and out of that room like fifty brooms, as quite spilte my tea, not as I could 'ave injoyed anythink, a-settin' there a-thinkin' about that poor thing as 'ad been that wiolent as to make 'em strap 'er down.

It must 'ave been full eight when Martin come back in the room, and said as the doctor 'ad give leave for me to see 'er, so up I goes into the ward as she were in all alone in a bed up at the other end.

She were a-layin' all quiet in a 'eap, and 'er 'air 'ad been cut I could see, so I went up and set down

by the bed for a bit, and watched 'er till I see as she were wide awake, and a-starin' at me.

I says, a-speakin' gentle like, "Ann," I says, "do you know me?"

She says, "You ain't mother come back from 'er grave to curse me."

I says, "No, my dear, she wouldn't do that, she'd come to love you and comfort you; but," I says, "I'm Mrs. Brown as you did used to live with when the snow come in at the top of the 'ouse and you busted the water-pipe a-tryin' to thaw it with the red 'ot poker, as were well meant tho' a herror."

She says, "I want to tell you somethink," and puts up 'er 'ead as I stooped down to listen to. "And," she says, in a whisper, "you said I should kill baby, and so I did."

I give sich a start as made 'er say very quick, "No, no, I didn't murder it, no; but I let it die, and yet I loved it dearly. Oh! my poor 'ead," she said.

I says, "Let me cool it for you," and put a rag with winegar and water to it; she were as gentle as a lamb with me, tho' the nuss told me arterwards as she'd tore it off when she'd put it on.

Arter that she seemed to doze like, and the nuss come and told me as she'd been dreadful wiolent all night till jest on five, when she got werry

drowsy, and the doctor come in and said she were wuss.

I says, "I should like to 'ave a good look at 'er when you think the gas bein' turned up won't startle 'er."

"Oh!" she says, "the doctor's a-comin' in to see 'er the last thing, as will be werry soon," and sure enuf it were, for she 'adn't 'ardly spoke when in come the doctor, and up went the gas, and then I see as the poor thing were a-dyin'

So I says, "I think I'll go and see arter 'er 'usban' myself, for I'm sure he did ought to be sent for."

Says the doctor, "Certingly, if you think he'd like to see 'er."

"Well," I says, "sir, in course she's been a werry bad wife and mother too, but," I says, "when it comes to this, that's a 'ard 'art as wouldn't wish to say Good-bye in peace."

He didn't say nothink, but give the nuss some orders and walks out of the ward in a 'urry.

The nuss she said she were a-goin' to get some medsin, if I'd stop a minit, or else she'd send for some one.

I says, "No, I'll stop," and glad I am as I did, for jest as I went up to the bedside, that poor thing spoke to me quite like a 'uman bein', and asks for some drink, as I give 'er some wine and

water, and then she says, "Oh! I've 'ad sich a dreadful dream, but it's only a dream, and where's poor Ned?"

I guessed as she meant 'er 'usban', so says, "Lay still, my dear, I'll see if we can find 'im to come and see you."

"Oh," she says, "I know he'll come, I know he will;" and then she put 'er 'and to 'er 'ead as if she were tryin' to think, and says to 'erself, "No, they're dead," and give a 'eavy sigh.

Jest then the nuss come in and whispers to me, as they'd found 'er 'usban', and would I tell 'er he were comin to see 'er.

I says, "All right," and then I says, "Ann, do you want to see your 'usban'?"

She says, "Where is he?" and tried to jump up, but 'adn't no strength.

So I says, a-layin' my 'and on 'er arm, as were a downright skelinton, "Be quiet, and he shall come," and goes downstairs into the waitin'-room, and there he was a-standin' along with Martin, a-goin' on like any one distracted.

So I says, "If you wants to kill 'er at once, you'll go on like that."

"Now," I says, "command yourself like a man, and go and speak to 'er."

"But," says he, "she won't die; tell me she won't die."

I says, "My good soul, I can't tell you wot is false, for she ain't long for this world."

He says, "It's all my fault; she was the best, the soberest girl in the world when she married me."

I says, "She certingly were;" and then he says, "When we got into sich distress, we both took to drink to drown our sorrers, and it was all my fault and that cursed Trades' Union."

I see there was no good talkin' to 'im, so let 'im go on for a bit, till at last he said as he must go and see 'er.

She'd been put in a ward by 'erself thro' bein' that wiolent at fust, and it's a mussy she were, for never did I see a man go on like that poor creetur when he got up to 'er bed.

I was a-goin' to leave 'im at the door of the ward, but he shook like a leaf as the sayin' is, and clung to my harm, and when the nuss drawed back the curtain as that bed were behind, I thought as he'd gone mad.

He says, "That ain't my wife, never."

She knowed his woice, and cries out, "Ned, Ned, don't leave. Oh, forgive me this once, and I'll never, never deceive you again."

He dropped on 'is knees by the bed, and oh! it were orful to 'ear the words as he said about 'imself.

So I says to the nuss, "Let's leave 'em," as she agreed to, thro' bein' a poor wore-out creetur as 'ad seen sorrers 'erself, and 'er and me and Mrs. Martin took and set in the next ward a-waitin' and a-waitin' ever so long till at last the nuss said as she'd go and see 'ow things was in there.

I follers 'er to the door of the ward, and looked in and see that poor feller still a-kneelin' by the bed, but quite quiet. I give a bit of a corf like, but he didn't take no notice, so I goes up to 'im, and there he was a-'oldin' 'is dead wife in 'is arms, a-sobbin' fit to break 'is 'art.

I puts my 'and on 'is shoulder, and says, "Come, my good friend, it's all over;" he didn't say nothink, but got up and laid 'er down quite gentle; and then bust out a-cryin', as I knowed would do 'im good, so only give 'im a chair, as he sunk down on like; and begun a-tellin' me 'ow she knowed 'im quite well, and 'ad prayed to be forgiven, and he was sure as she was.

I says, "Let's 'ope so; but," I says, "none on us ought to judge, for," I says, "we are all sinners."

"Yes," he says, "and if I'd been less harsh with 'er it would 'ave been different; but when I give up drinkin' myself and took the pledge, I was that irritable with 'er, and tried to drive when I might 'ave led the poor thing."

"Ah!" I says, "if we would only think when we're a-goin' to be angry or unkind to any one, of 'ow we should feel if they was dead and gone, it would check many a 'arsh word and deed too."

So as there wasn't nothink more to be done, I wished 'im a good night, and give 'im my aedress, a-promisin' as I'd go with 'im to see 'er laid in 'er grave, as she were quite respectable, and I see the two little gals arter that, and often drops in to 'ave a chat with their grandmother at the back of the Coborn Road, and as to the Martins, as I often wisits, if all masters and matrons of workuses was like them, why they'd be very different.

So I thinks as that paintin' will no doubt do good, a-showin' where to draw the line with drink, as is a blessin' and comfort to some, tho' a cuss and a sin to others; and you may say the same of nearly everythink else in this world.

I 'ave 'rard say as that party as painted that picter were used werry bad thro' a-lendin' of it to be showed about the country as a lesson like, and not only never got anythink by it, but as 'ad to pay 'undreds to get back 'is own property, as it's a shame as he should lose; so I 'opes as he'll get 'elp from them as admires 'is paintin's and 'is principles, as in course lent the picter for to do a good turn jest the same as me lendin' Mrs. Goodall my

welwet cape trimmed with bugles and Maltese lace for to cut a respectable figger at 'er grand child's cristenin', and arter over three months only got the ticket, as were in for twenty-five shillin', and that creased when I got it out, as I shouldn't never 'ave knowed it for the same, with the lace as brown as a berry, as the sayin' is, and a lot of the gimp off, so you do not ketch me a-lendin' my things no more, as 'ave got lovely shawls by me as come along with a sable muff and tippet from my aunt's both sides, as is reg'lar hair looms, as the sayin' is.

I don't care wot they may say about that there South Kensin'ton bein' a job, as pre'aps it may be, and preaps they adwances money on the things as they call lent, as may be a conwenience to them as owns 'em; but I do say and I will as there's no end of credit due to all of them as got it up, for tho' in course it's no good to a lot of idle, lazy waggerbones, as prefers a-sottin' away their time in a public-'ouse, yet there's many a respectable workin' man, and 'is wife too, as would take a pleasure in walkin' thro' them lovely things, as in course gives any one new ideas about wot's beautiful, and for my part, now as it's so easy got at, I shall werry often drop in and look at them things; and as it were never got 'ome till past ten, for I were riveted to that place, and it's surprisin' to me as it

ain't crowded, for there's heverythink as the 'art can wish for, includin' a 'ot dinner, as I see a gent a-takin' in the refreshment department, or you may 'ave a chop or your tea, as is a great conwenience to them as is only up in town for a day or two, and not able to get anythink at their lodgin's when they goes 'ome at night, and is altogether a reg'lar place for them as wants to enjoy theirselves rational, without a-goin' to too great espence, tho' for that matter there's no goin' out without a-spendin' of money, as Old Parkin did used to say, "If you wants not to spend your money, never put your 'at on," tho' I've knowed them as stopped at 'ome drop it pretty fast, and Old Parkin were one on 'em as would set the 'ole day long a-playin' cards, and 'ave lorst as much as seven and eight shillin's over cribbage at 'apenny games, aad lose 'is temper, add swear 'orrible into the bargain.

But as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Padwick over supper that werry night, give me the South Kensington, tho' I must say I dld dream orful arter it as I were stuffed in a glass case, and couldn't dror my breath; and then as the perlice collared me for taking one of them dimons, as sure enuf were found in my redicule; and then I thought I were a-playin' 'evanly on one of them 'arps, and got a crack on the 'ead as rolled me all down them Maryolicer

stairs as struck that hawful cold, and when I woke up found as I'd been and tumbled out of bed, as couldn't 'ave been hanythink I'd took thro' only a picked crab and cowcumber for supper, as I took lots of pepper with and the unions always makes 'olesome; but the truth is, as I 'ave been a-seein too much lately as 'ave pressed on the brain and give me them wisions, so I means to keep quiet a bit, as too much racketin' about ain't good for nobody, tho' a 'oliday now and then does every one good, partikler I should say South Kensin'ton, as is food for the mind, as the sayin' is, and a credit to them as got it up; and if they 'ave feathered their own nests, as the sayin' is, why so much the better, only they didn't ought to carry that there work too far, 'cos they'll get pulled up short.

Some says as they wants to make South Kensington Museum all Ingland, as in course would be foolishness, them a-wantin' everythink there, as they might certingly make a werry nice pallis for Queen Wictoria, only she'd be mobbed a deal too much, I should say; besides, she's right not to make 'erself too common, but to 'old 'er 'ead up on 'er proper spear, and keep parties as would make too free keep their distance; for I'm sure I don't where the lower orders is a-comin' to, that I don't, as ain't got no manners with cabmen, never a-sayin' thankee, nor servants, yes, mum, and will

actually give you 'apence in change without bein' ropped up in a bit of paper, as were always the signs of a respectable shop, and there was my gal, with a letter to Miss Matilder Flyblow.

I says to 'er, "Miss, indeed," I says, "who made you a miss, as is false notions, and been the ruin of many a decent gal gettin' 'er 'ead turned with bein' a young lady, as is sure to hend bad." I says, "if you wants to be respected, be'ave yourself becomin' your statien, and do your utmost for to get up in the world, but by 'onest ways, for there's a-many as 'ave got on by the crooked way, and what are they, why refuse and rubbish, as tho' they may ride in their carridge is despised by the crossin'-sweeper, as may touch 'is 'at with a toss of 'is 'ead in derishun.

No, I'm one as 'olds with improvin' the workin' classes, as I don't consider means dressin' up a parcel of gals and young fellers to imitate them as calls theirselves their betters, but only wot a real 'onest workin' man or woman would look down on and despise, a-knowin' well as they're nothink but shams as won't bear lookin' into, and as never can know peace or 'appiness, and, in a gin'ral way, flies to drink for to drown their cares, as is what South Kensin'ton werry properly pints ont the morals on.

I must say as I considers as it's a pity as that

South Kensin'ton is that far off from everywhere, as is a reg'lar journey for them as lives all about Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, 'cos that's where them shows is wanted, and quite throwed away on them swells at the West-end, as in course never goes near it thro' bein' that used to see all them lovely things at 'ome, and would as soon think of goin' to look at 'em as Queen Wictoria would of goin' to the Tower for to see the Crown Jewels as is kept there for safety.

In course, there's one thing as keeps lots away, as is the espence, because it's all werry well for to say as the bus will give a good lift for thrippence, and ten times as fur as a shillin's-worth in the old 'ackney coach days, as the longest ever knowed in London were from the Black 'Orse, Coventry-street, to the corner of Sloane-street, as more 'ackney coachmen was summonsed for than any other part of London; but, as I were a-sayin', you come to be seven or eight in a party, and go by two busses as will make a 'ole in five shillin's, and then look at the drop of beer, and preaps a little fruit or a somethink for the children, with a bottle or two of ginger-beer and a few penny hices, and where's 'arf a sovrin' in no time, tho' you may take the bit of wittles with you as ain't cost nothink, let me tell you and then see 'ow a workin' man on two an' twenty

shillin's a week is to give 'is family a treat, let alone them as 'ave eighteen to keep 'em on, as is perlicemen and railway porters, and dreadful long 'ours at work to get even that, and that's why I considers there's a deal of rubbish talk about improvin' the workin' man: give him more wages and less work, and then he'll be sure to improve 'isself; but as it is, he ain't got the time to see nothink nor the money to spend over it.

As to bus-drivers and conductors, they works seven days a week a many on 'em, and sixteen 'ours a day, so they've a deal of time for improving their minds, and bringin' up their families proper; as it's my opinion as no man ought to be at work more than ten 'ours a day, and 'arf Sunday to 'isself anyhow; and then, if workin' men was on the strike and dissatisfied, I'd make short work with them, the same as I would with them as gets drunk and beats their wives, for wotever is the use of sendin' a brutal feller to prison for a month, as 'll 'arf murder the wretched woman when he comes out agin; but if he was to get a good taste of the lash for it, with a promise as he should get double allowance if he dared to raise 'is finger agin 'er, you wouldn't have these brave fellows, as goes spoutin' in public'ouses about liberty, a-treatin' their wives a deal wuss than dogs, the willin's.

Not but wot in my opinion it's werry often six of one and 'arf a dozen of the other, and as to that Mrs. Winey, as come and told me as some ladies 'ad give 'er money for to go over to Merryker to get out of 'er 'usband's way afore he comes out of prison, as 'ad wowed he'd murder 'er, why, in my opinion, she's no good, partikler when I 'eard as she were a-goin' to leave two little children behind 'er.

So I says to 'er, "In my opinion you're a wile, good-for-nothink wretch, and as to them ladies as 'elps you to make a bolt on it, they're fools; and it's my opinion as you're a-goin' off with some other feller."

She turned that pale and walks 'erself off, and I knows I'm right, for never will I believe as a true-'arted woman would take care of 'er own carcuss and leave two poor little boys for a bad father to neglect or make thieves on.

I ain't 'ardly patience for to 'ear of the foolishness of ladies and gentlemen, as no doubt means well, and goes among the poor, and in a general way only 'elps the impostors, as there's thousands as lives on beggin', as I've knowed 'em myself a-livin' in luxury, and never shall forget one waggerbone as I went to see myself as 'ad got forged doctors' certifycates and all manner, and went in

for the pious dodge, and 'is wife too, and 'umbugged the Catholics a-pretendin' they was converted that way, and then turned round and imposed on the Protestants by sayin' as they wanted to come over to them.

Ah! that's the rub, as the sayin' is, people all a-tradin' in religion, as blinds parties one way or the other; as is why I never will myself 'ave anythink to do with parties as comes the cant dodge over me.

I always says to 'em, "I ain't got nothink to do with your religion, that's your own affair, as you might deceive me over, but can't take in One as knows everythink;" and I says, "If you've got good principles, so much better for you, as I should like to find 'em out thro' a-seein' your hacts, not because you're always at chapel, as is easy work, and may be only all idleness," so I never won't 'ave nothink to do with them as talks about their piety.

No doubt there's a many as is drove to be 'ippercrits, just as they're drove to drink thro' poverty, but in the ginral way both 'ippercrits and drunkards is bad lots from the beginnin'; and there's no way to cure 'em, but in course the young 'uns may be brought up better and turn out good men and women, if they're taught their dooty proper, and

not 'ave their 'eads filled with rubbish as won't do no good, as I considers teachin' all the poor children music downright wicked waste of time, as would be much better bestowed in learnin' to work and sow, and then a poor man would find a wife as would keep 'is 'ome tidy and cook 'is bit of dinner comfortable and mend his clothes, and not be a-readin' rubbish in penny number novels and playin' the pianer, as is only bringin' up poor gals to be a disgrace to their sect, and makes workin' men afraid to marry em.

I must say as I likes South Kensin'ton to look at, but it's too far a-head of workin' people, as did ought to begin with bein' taught their dooty; for as to wot they calls edication now-a-days, it's a deal on it nothink but givin' young people false notions as makes 'em grow up into regl'ar Commynests like the French, as is wuss than the Mormons in their ways, and will 'ave to be destroyed some day like a wasps' nest, and goodness knows it can't for want of seein' fine paintin's and things as the French 'ave turned out that bad, for they've got show enuf and all gracious free for nothink, so it ain't lookin' at lovely things as makes people civilized, as the sayin' is; no, it's bein' taught as they did ought to do as they'd be done by, live and let live, as the sayin' is, and if rich and poor would think more

about that, then both would get on better, and we shouldn't 'ave sich lots of rich men with ten of thousands as they don't want, nor yet paupers by the million as don't know where to turn to earn a 'onest crust.

It's all wrong we're some on us a deal too rich and others a deal too poor, as will end badly some day, and not all the South Kensin'tons as ever was built or thought on won't stop it.

THE END.

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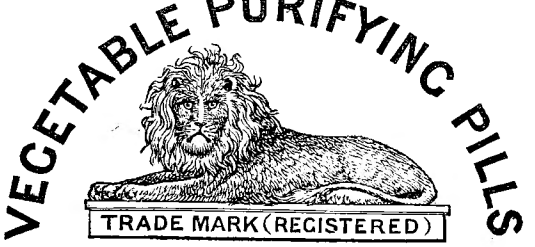
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